

AM I GOING TO
HAVE TO FIGHT
MY BROTHER
OVER SOME
SILLY **BIRD**!!!



I ALWAYS
THOUGHT
HE WAS A
SHIFTY,
UNTRUST-
WORTHY
LOSER,
ANYWAY...

I'LL HAVE THE EMPEROR PROCLAIM HIM AN ENEMY OF THE STATE...

GET OUT OF MY WAY!
DON'T YOU KNOW WHO I AM???

I'M MINAMOTO YOSHITSUNE! I MUST SEE THE EMPEROR, IMMEDIATELY!!

SILENCE!
HIS HIGHNESS WANTS NOTHING TO DO WITH YOU!!

DON'T YOU KNOW THAT YOU'VE BEEN BANISHED FROM THE CAPITAL!?

NO! IT CAN'T BE....!!

IF YOU DON'T BELIEVE US, TAKE A LOOK AT THAT SIGN POST!

IMPERIAL DECREE

REGARDING MAGISTRATE
MINAMOTO YOSHITSUNE

THE AFORENAMED PERSON, IN SPITE OF BEING HONORED FOR HIS EXPLOITS IN ROUTING THE TAIRA CLAN, HAS BLATANTLY DISREGARDED THESE HONORS, MADE UNREASONABLE AND IRRATIONAL DEMANDS UPON THE COURT, AND CONSPIRED IN ANTI-IMPERIAL ACTIVITIES, NAMELY THE USURPATION OF IMPERIAL POWER. THEREFORE, THE AFORENAMED IS HEREBY STRIPPED OF HIS TITLE AND ORDERED BANISHED FROM THE CAPITAL IMMEDIATELY AND WITHOUT RIGHT OF APPEAL.



"DISREGARDED HONORS"?!
"MADE IRRATIONAL DEMANDS"!?
...I CAN'T BELIEVE THIS!!

"CONSPIRED TO OVERTHROW THE GOVERNMENT" ??!

TH...THIS IS NONSENSE!!





THEN WHAT
SHOULD I
DO WITH
HIM, YOUR
HIGHNESS?

LOOK,
YOU
IDIOTS
...!

I JUST
NEED ONE
WORD
WITH THE
EMPEROR!!

WHAT!
B...BUT
THAT CAN'T
BE....!

PLEASE
...!!

FOR-
GET
HIM!

THROW
HIM
OUT!

B...BUT...
YOUR
HIGHNESS...
W...WHAT
REASON
CAN I
GIVE
HIM?

DO YOU
KNOW WHAT WILL
HAPPEN IF YORITOMO
BECOMES ANGRY
WITH US???

I DON'T WANT TO
HAVE ANYTHING MORE
TO DO WITH
YOSHITSUNE!!

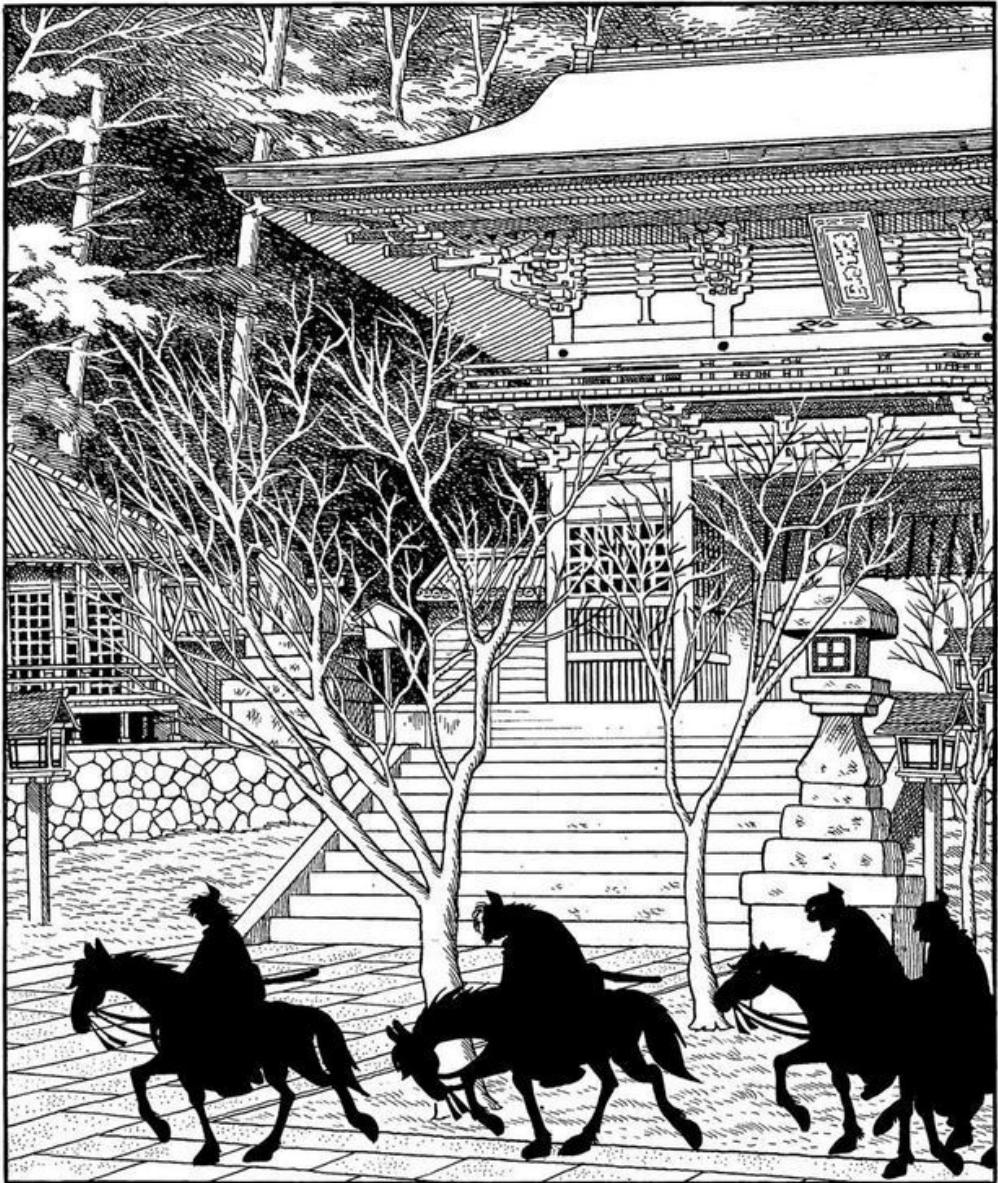
YOUR
HIGHNESS
!!

I CAN'T
BELIEVE IT.
JUST GIVE ME
ONE MINUTE
WITH HIM!!!

THE
EMPEROR IS
UNWILLING
TO SEE YOU,
SIR...







EXACTLY WHERE YOSHITSUNE AND HIS MEN WENT FROM THERE, AND HOW THEY TRAVELED, HAS BEEN LOST TO HISTORY. IT IS SAID THAT THEY WERE CONSTANTLY ON THE RUIN, HIDING IN THE HOUSES OF SYMPATHIZERS...BUT EVENTUALLY THEY RAN OUT OF HIDING PLACES, AND THE SMALL BAND ENDED UP TRAVELING BACK TO THEIR ORIGINAL BENEFATOR, FUJIWARA HIDEHIRA, IN HIRAIKUMI.

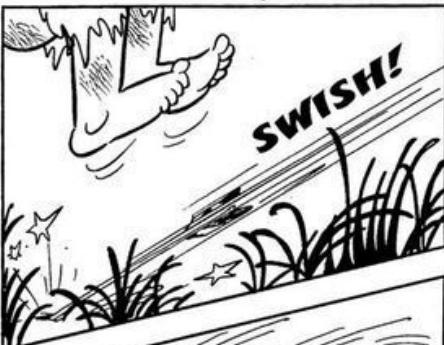
WHOOOOOOOOO

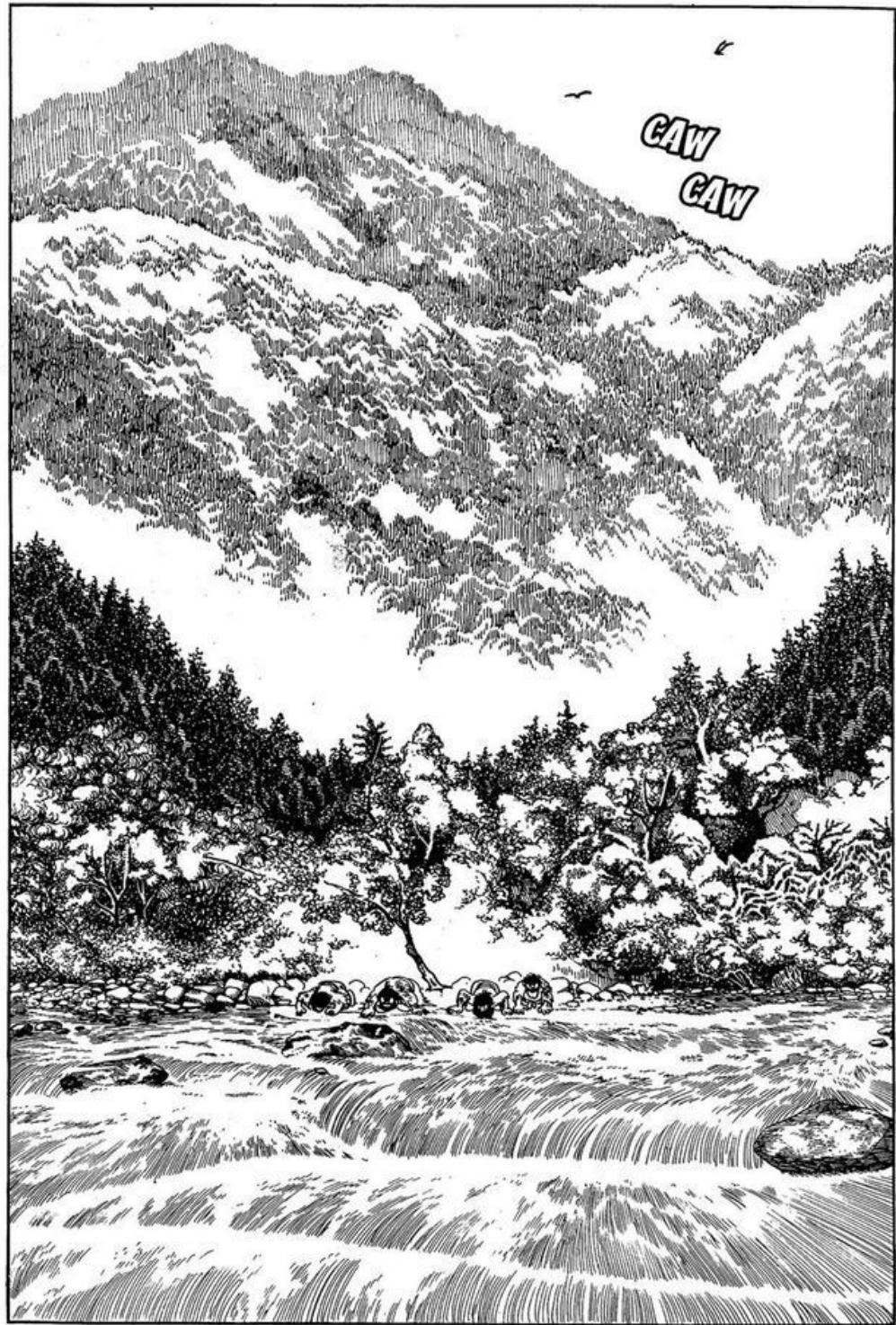


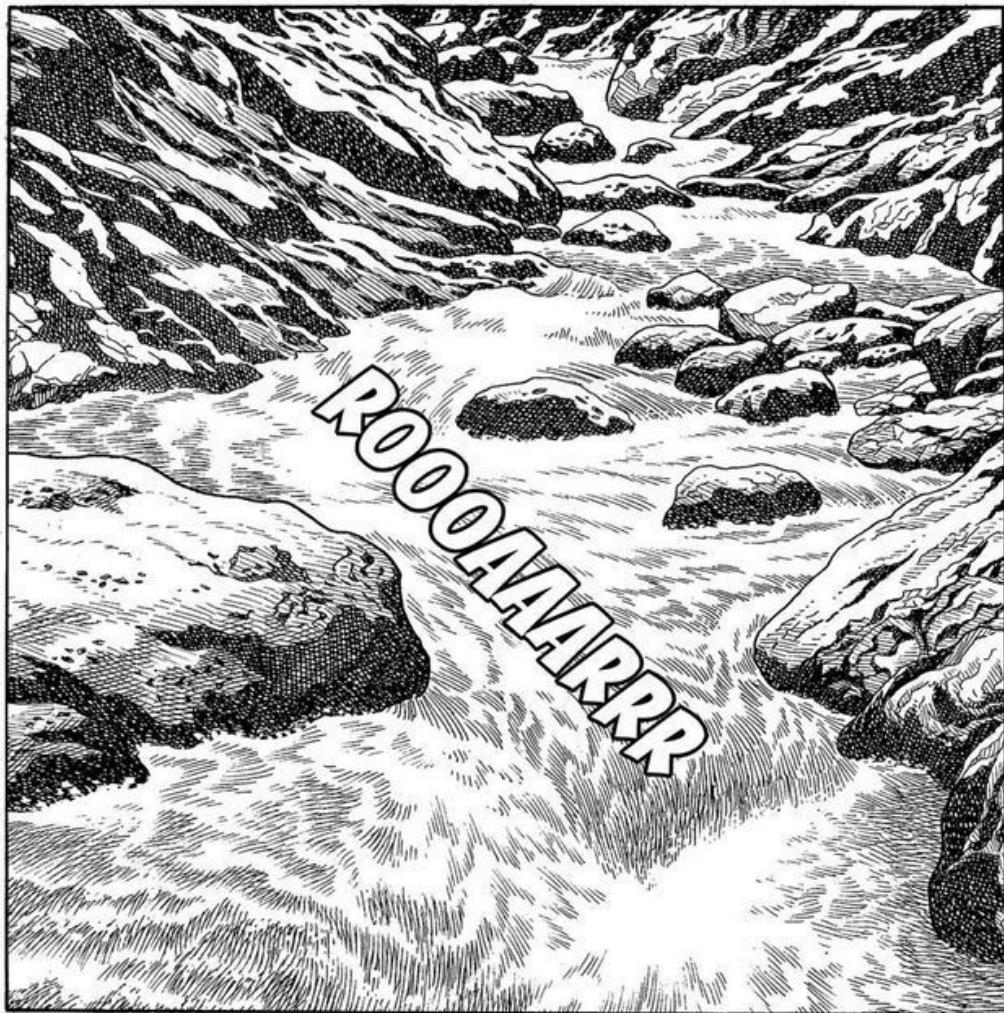
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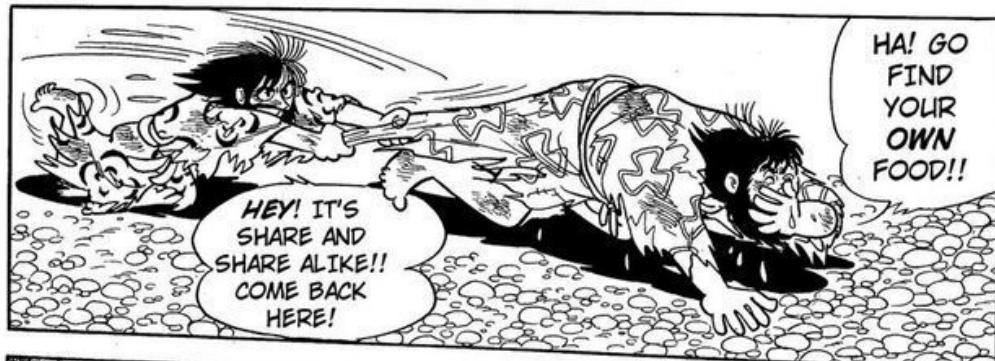
WHHHHEEEE00000000











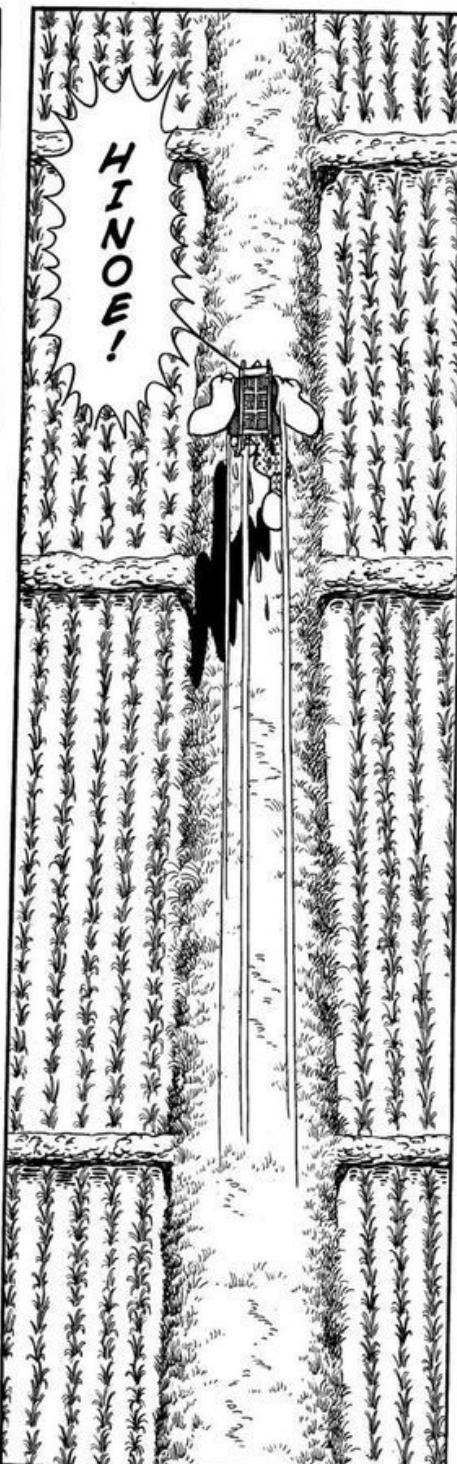






HIRAIZUMI

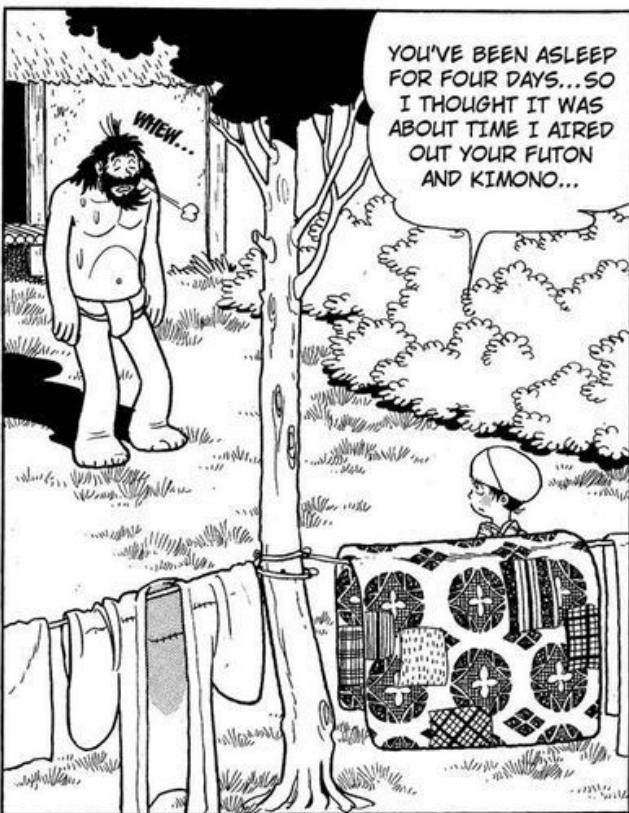


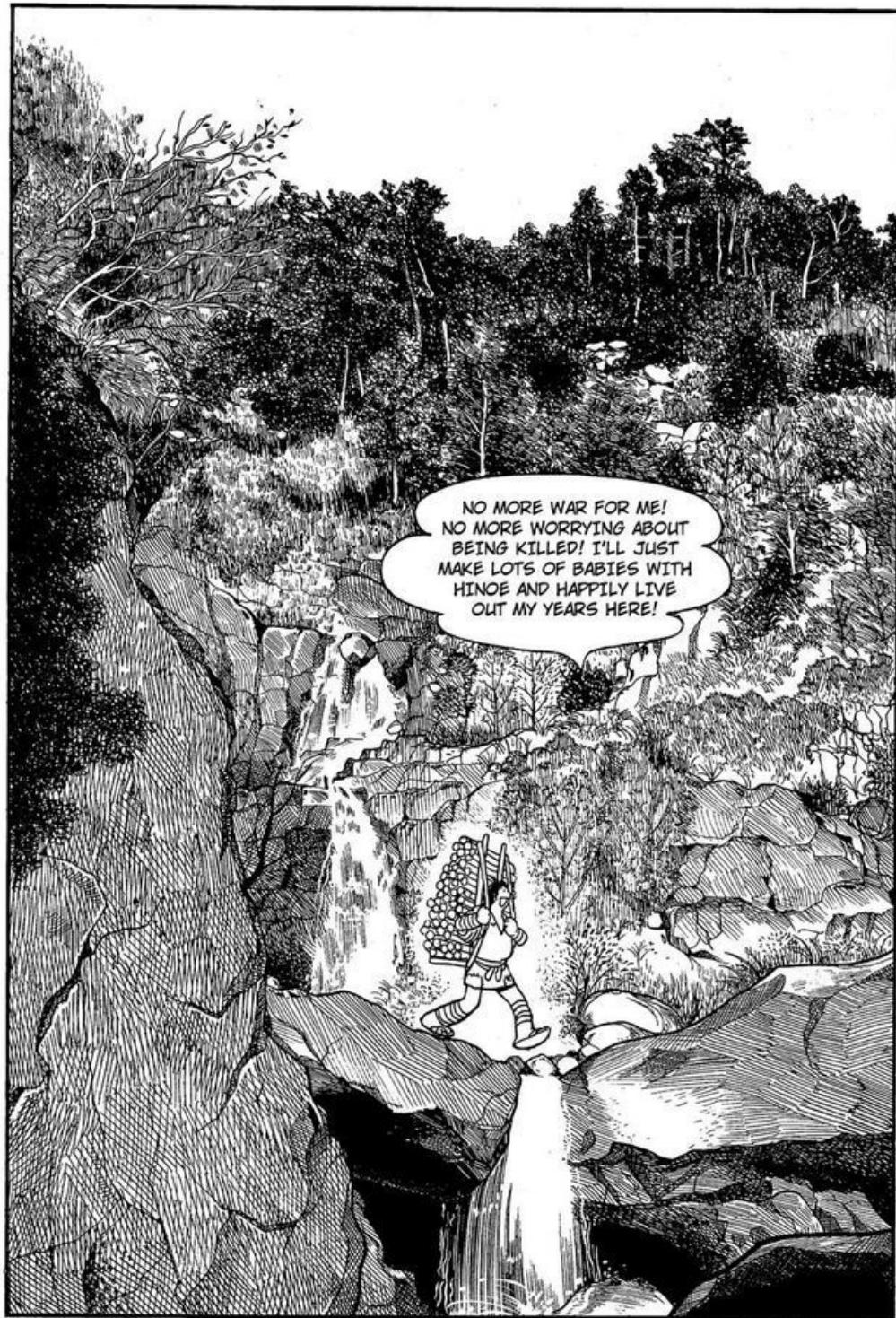












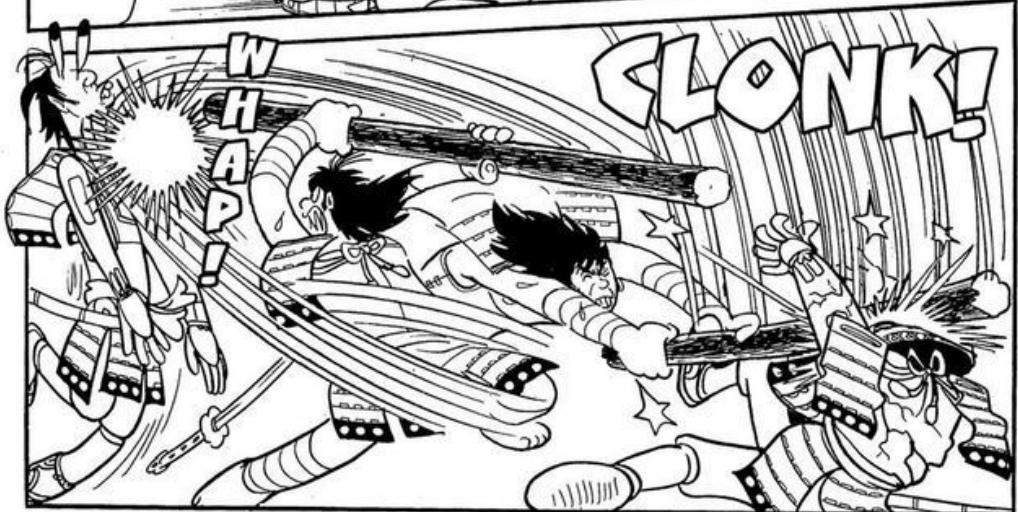
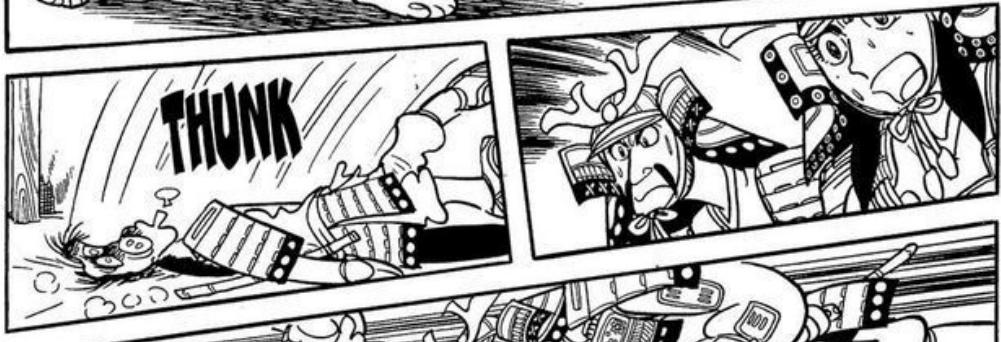
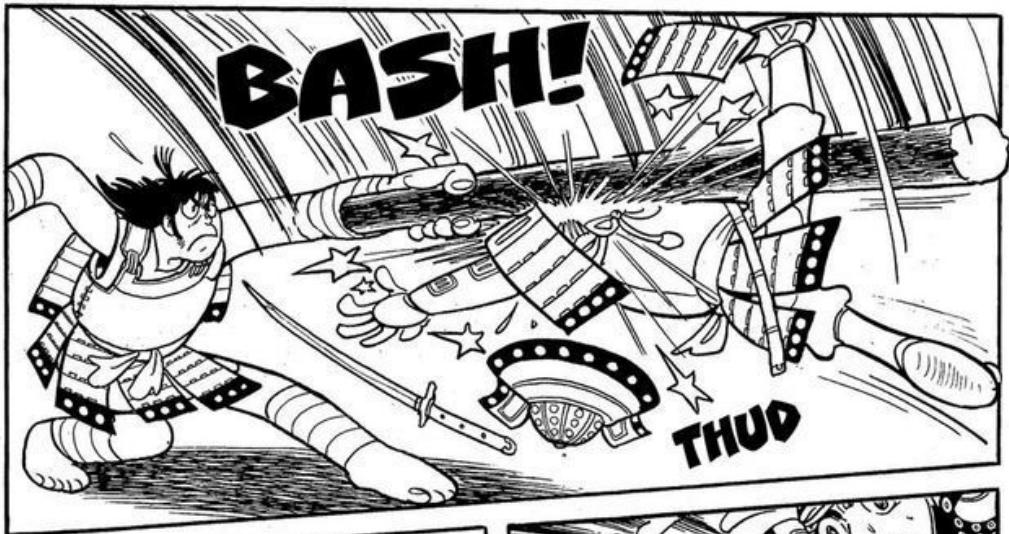


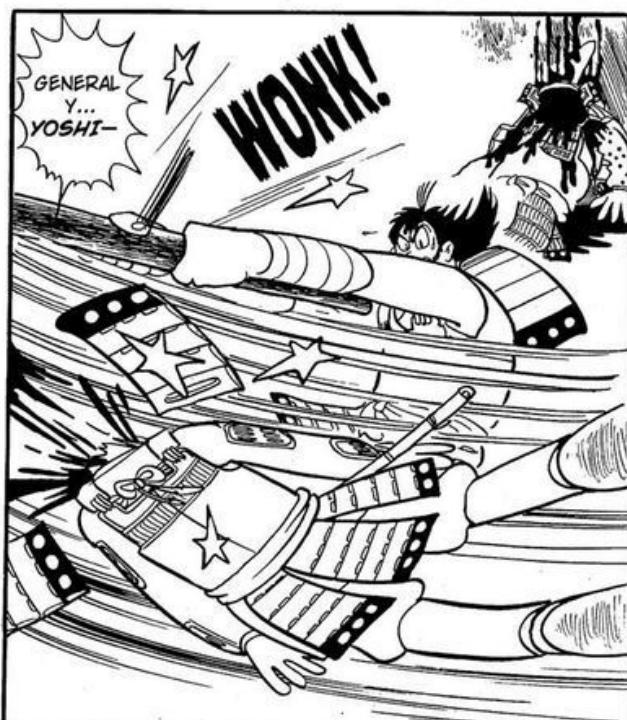
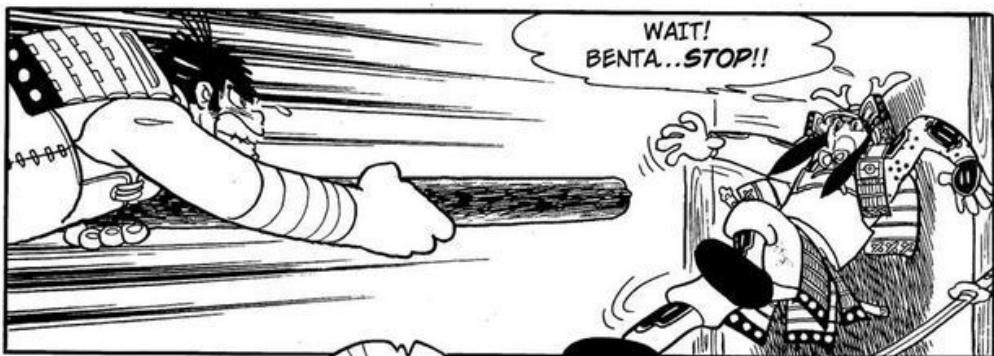


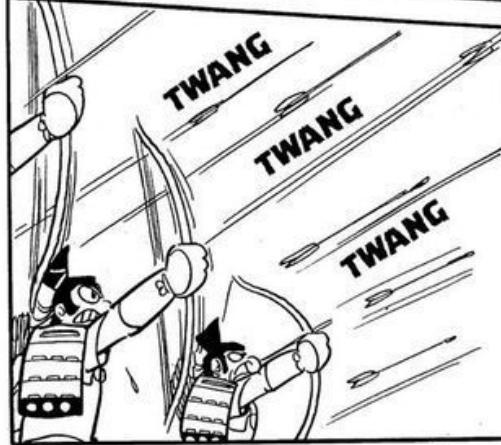
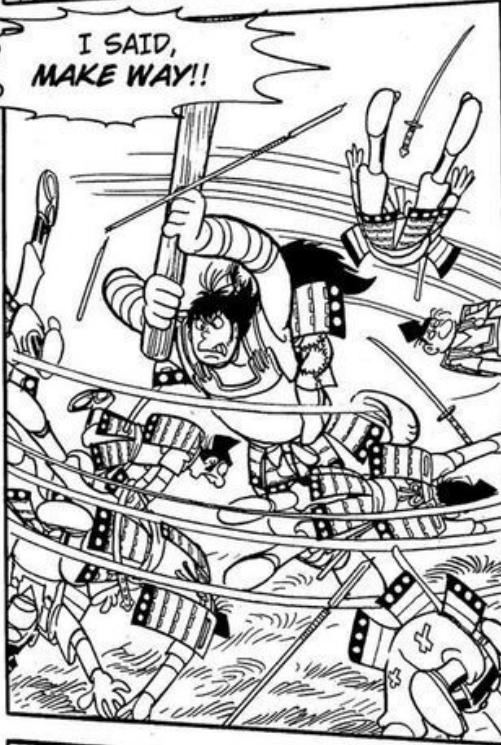


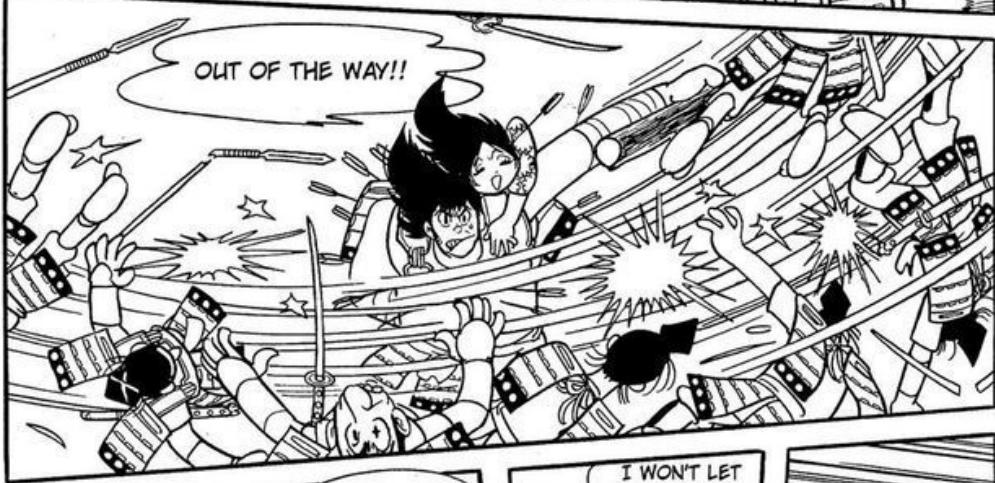
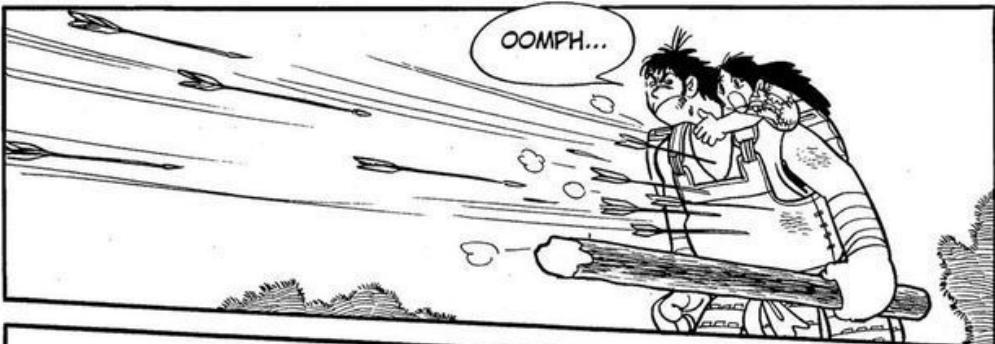






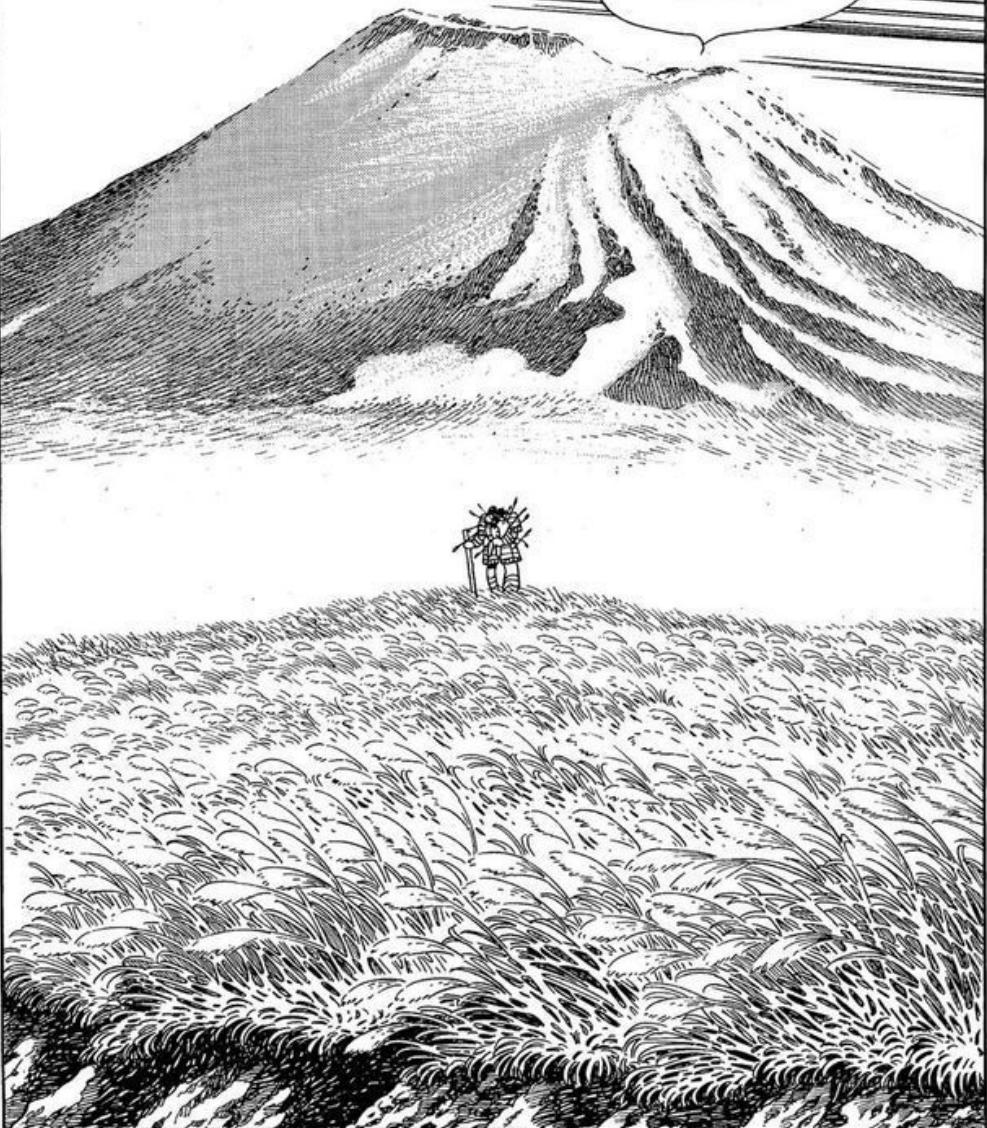




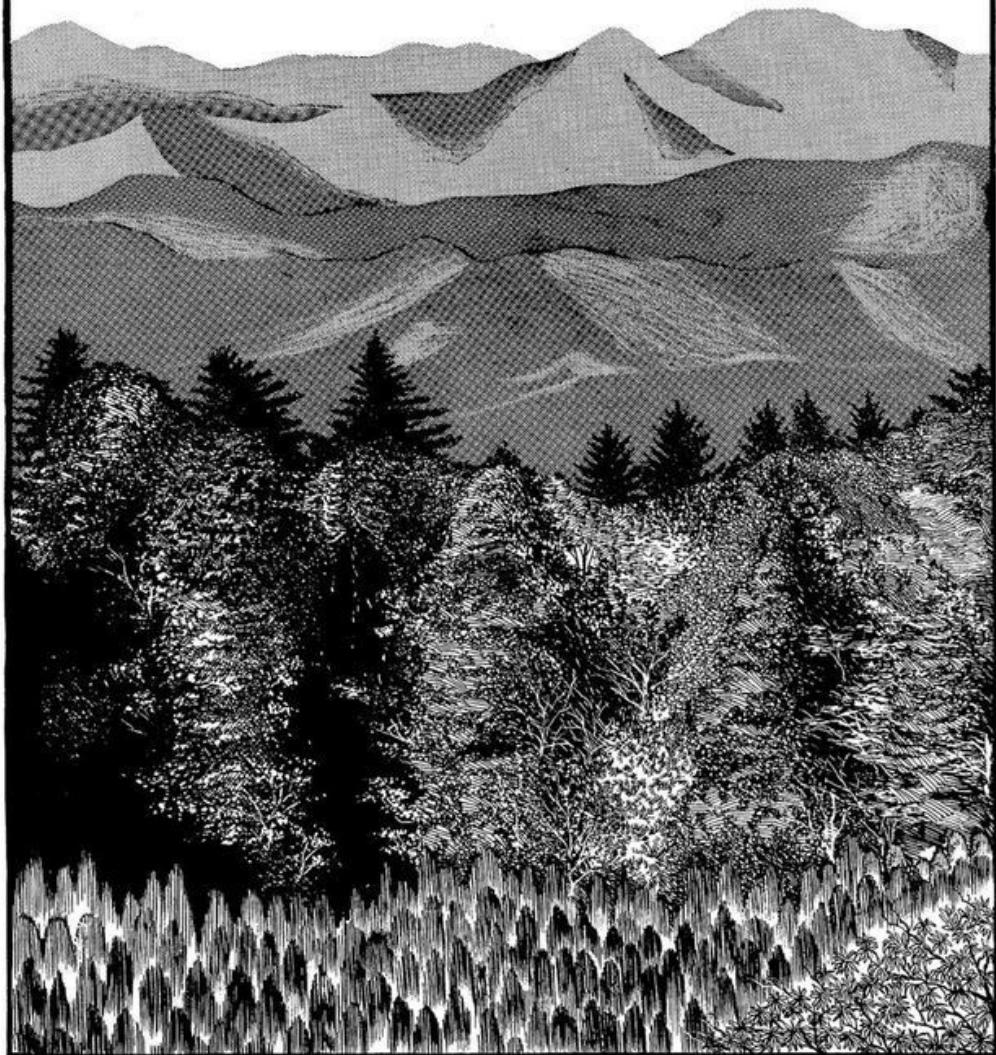




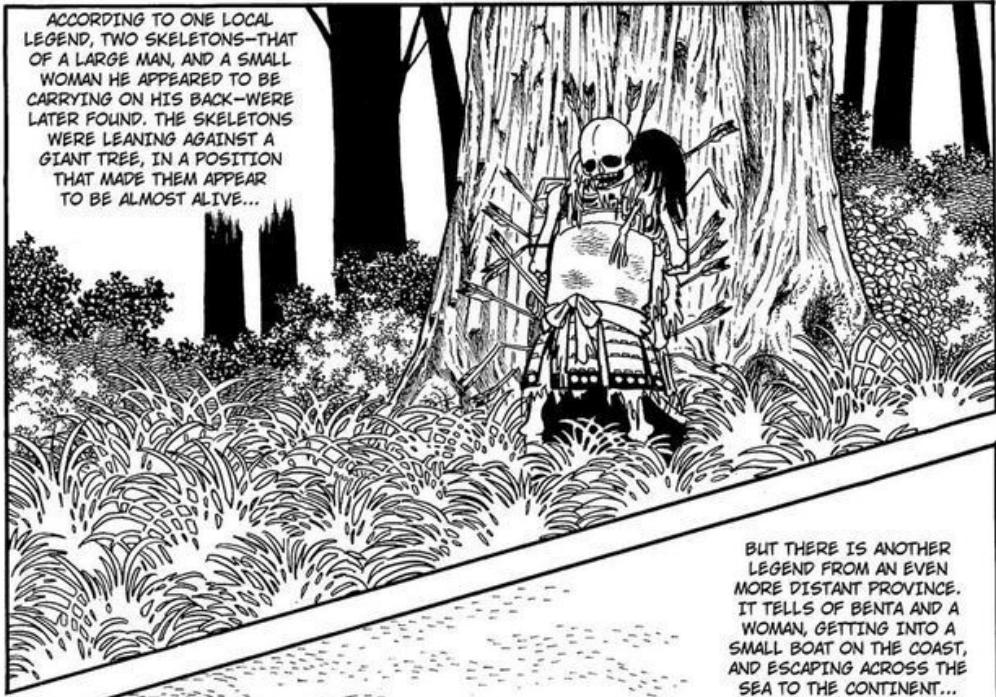
WE'LL NEVER
LET 'EM GET
US, WILL WE,
HINOE...



WHERE BENTA
AND HINOE WENT
FROM THERE IS
UNKNOWN...



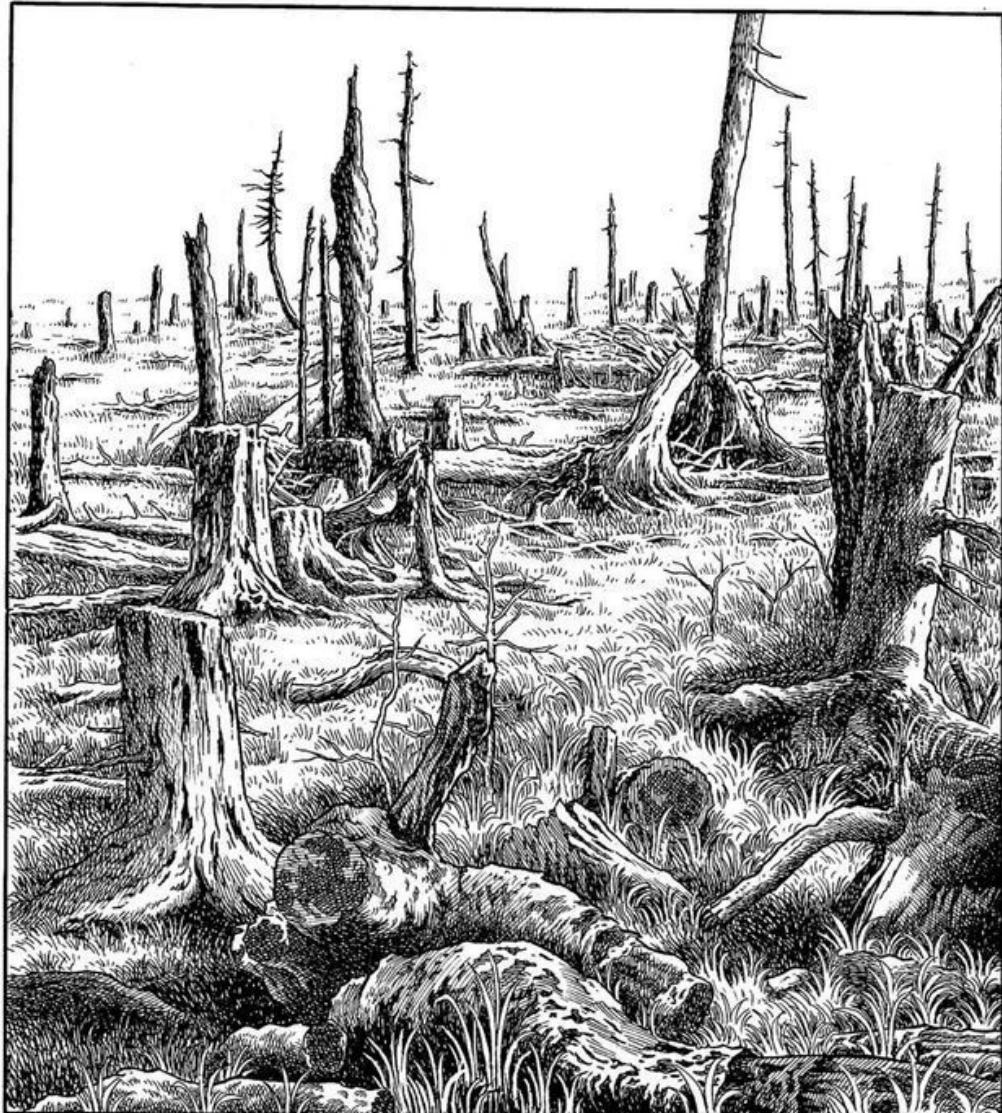
ACCORDING TO ONE LOCAL LEGEND, TWO SKELETONS—THAT OF A LARGE MAN, AND A SMALL WOMAN HE APPEARED TO BE CARRYING ON HIS BACK—WERE LATER FOUND. THE SKELETONS WERE LEANING AGAINST A GIANT TREE, IN A POSITION THAT MADE THEM APPEAR TO BE ALMOST ALIVE...



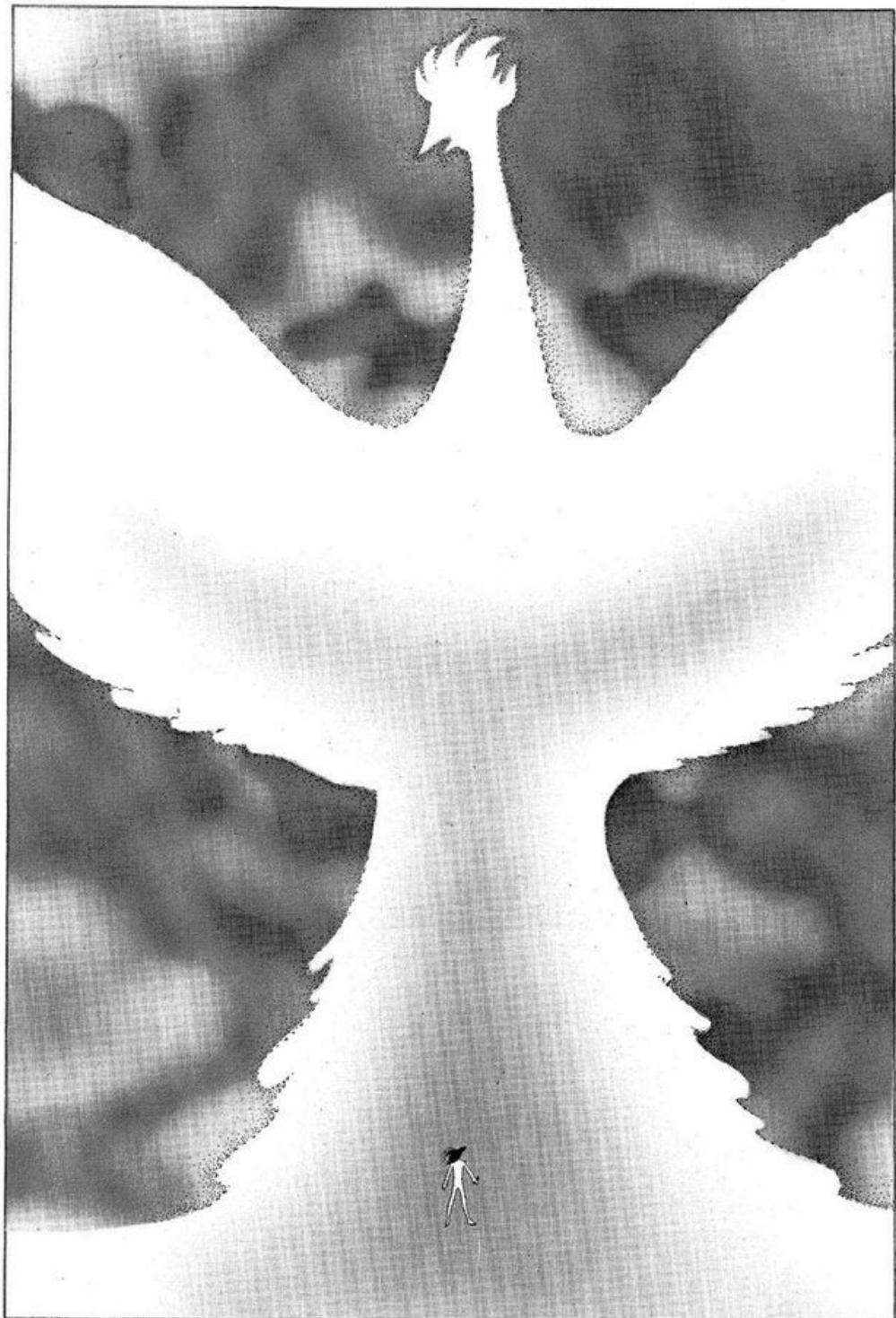
BUT THERE IS ANOTHER LEGEND FROM AN EVEN MORE DISTANT PROVINCE. IT TELLS OF BENTA AND A WOMAN, GETTING INTO A SMALL BOAT ON THE COAST, AND ESCAPING ACROSS THE SEA TO THE CONTINENT...

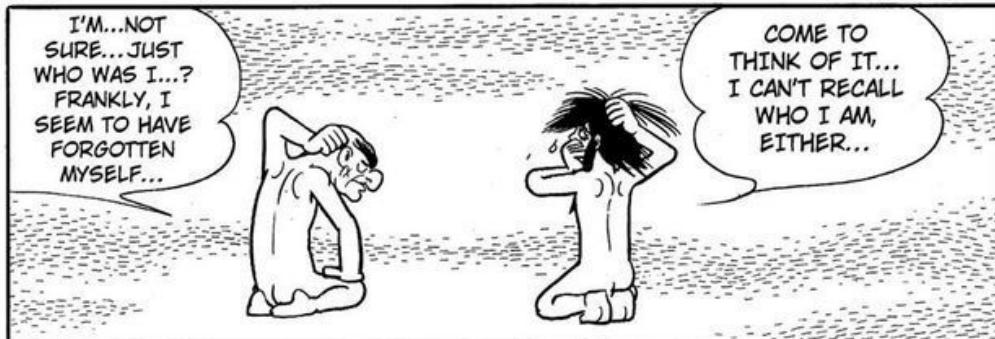
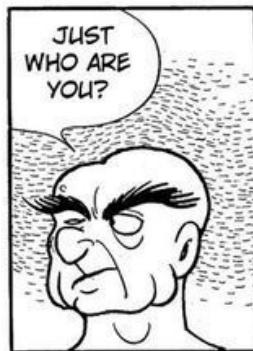


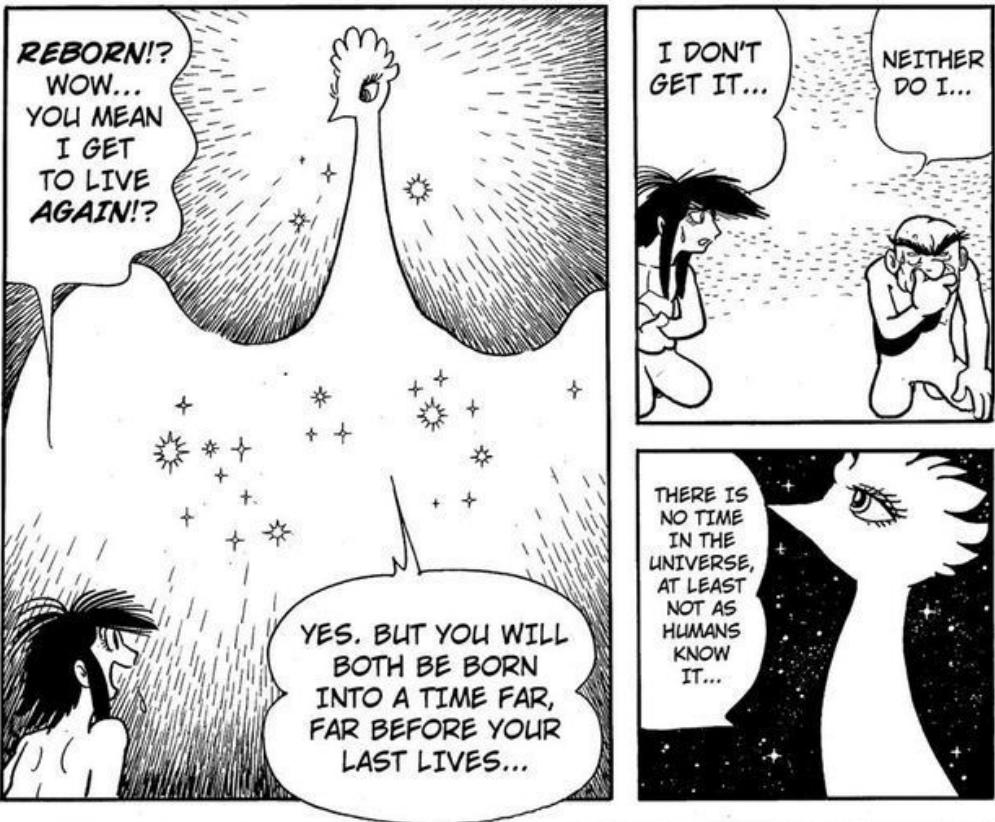
AT HIRAIUMI,
THE BODIES OF
YOSHITSUNE AND HIS
BAND WERE LATER
IDENTIFIED, BUT NO
ONE COULD FIGURE
OUT EXACTLY WHO HAD
KILLED HIM. THE NEW
GOVERNMENT IN
KAMAKURA THEREFORE
DECLARED HIS DEATH
"SELF-INFILCTED"
AND LEFT MATTERS
AT THAT...

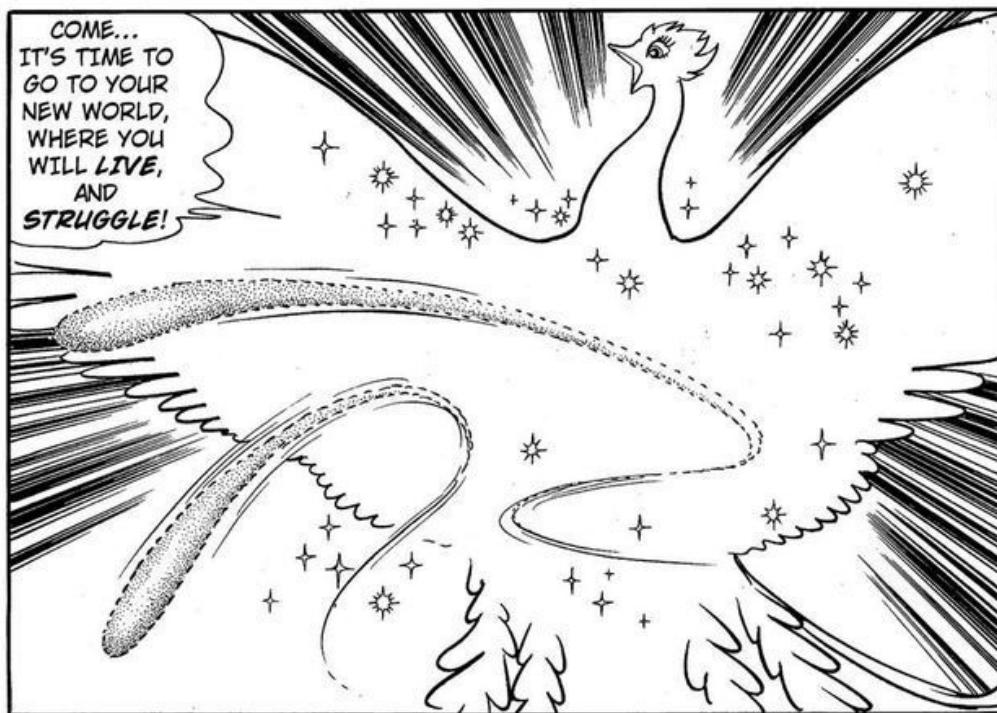
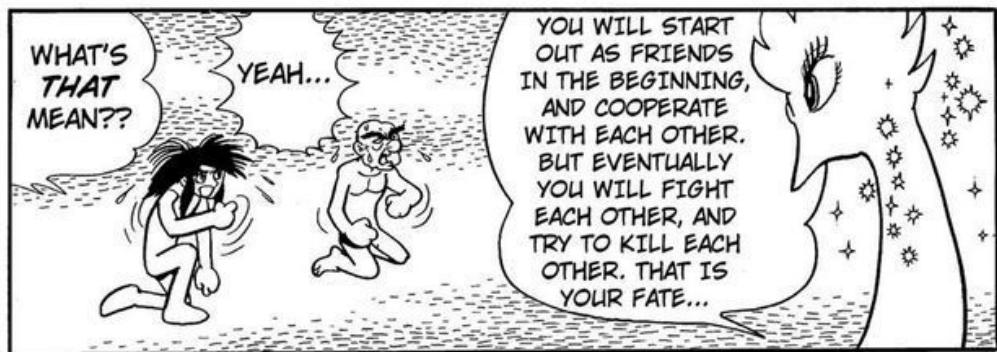


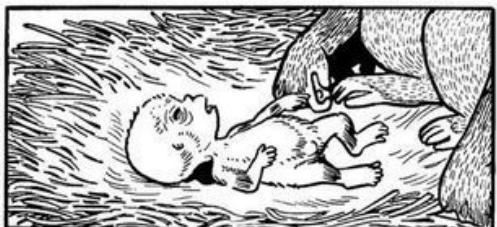
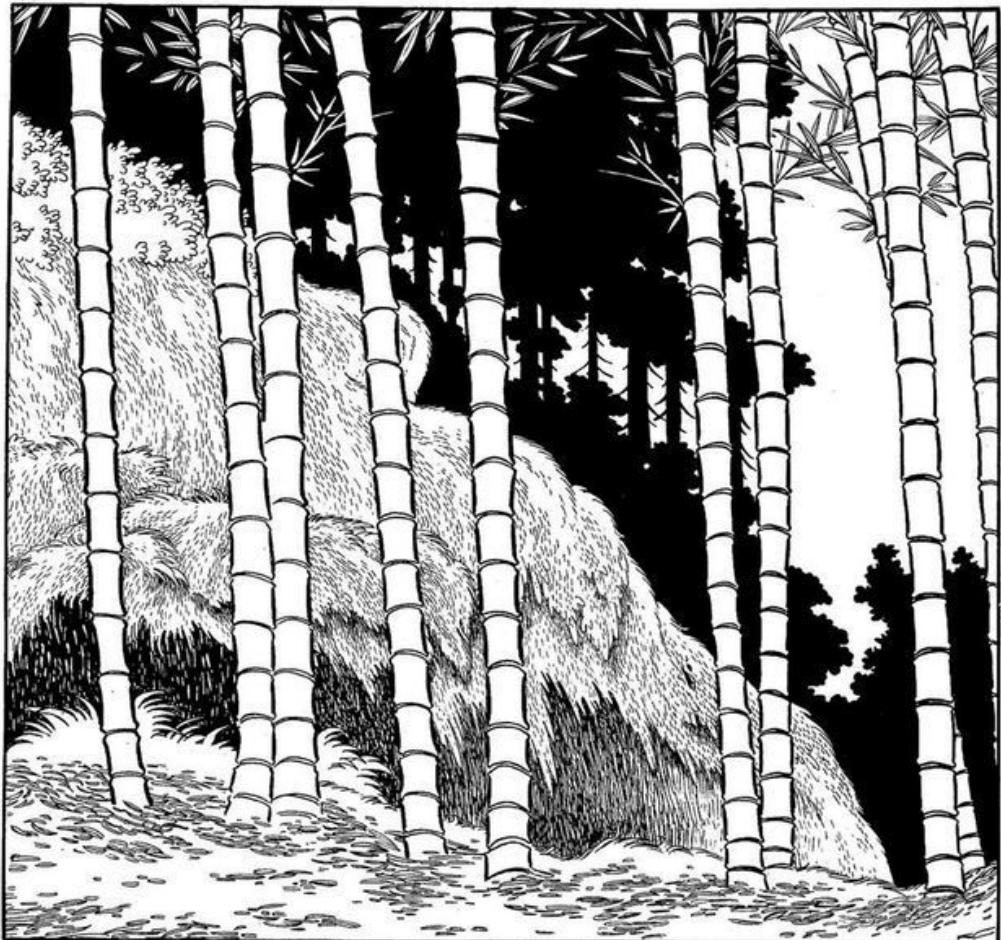


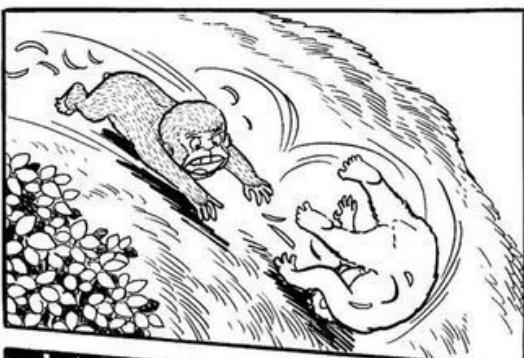
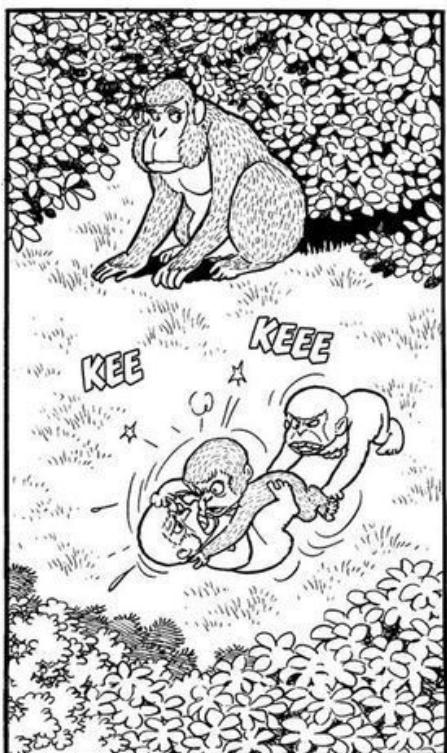
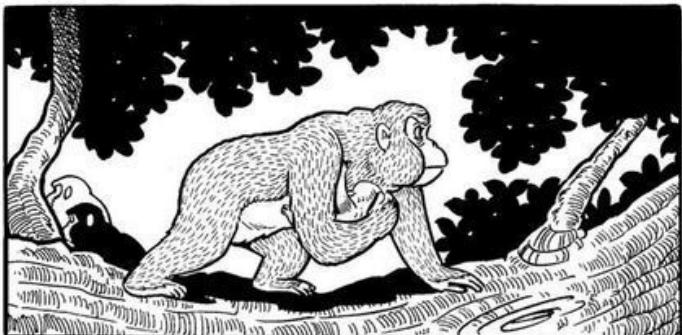








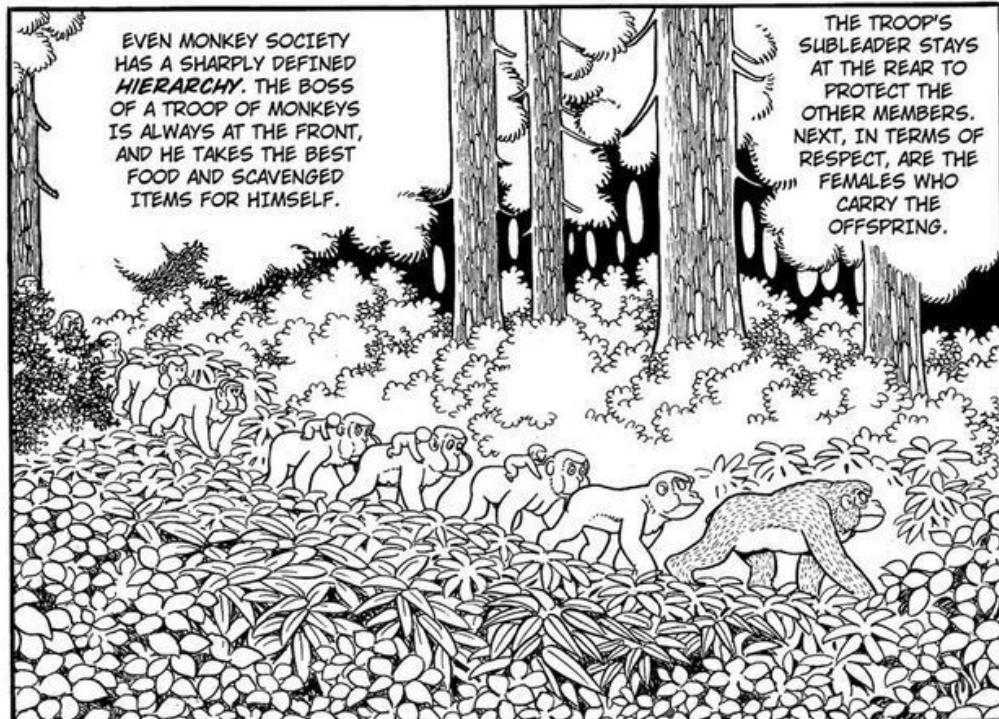
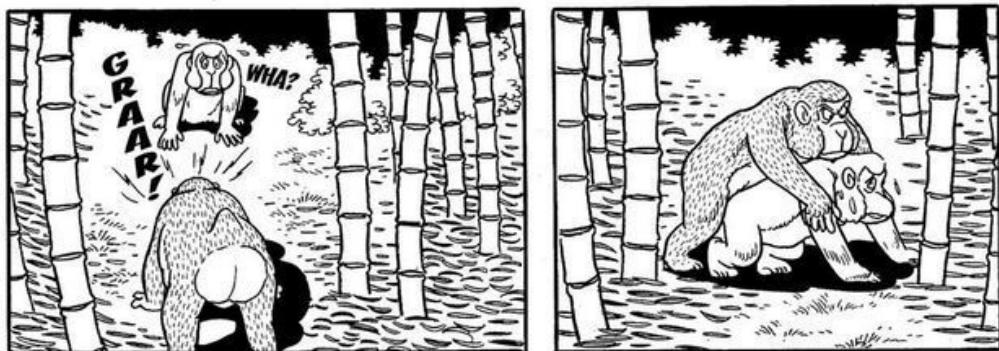






SOMEWHERE IN A
DEEP FOREST ON A
NAMELESS PASS ON
MT. KURAMA, A YOUNG
MONKEY, LIKE ALL
YOUNG MONKEYS,
PASSED THE TIME
PLAYING AND
GROWING...
BUT EVENTUALLY
THIS PARTICULAR
MONKEY
DISTINGUISHED
HIMSELF BY
BECOMING THE
LEADER OVER ALL OF
HIS YOUNG PALS.

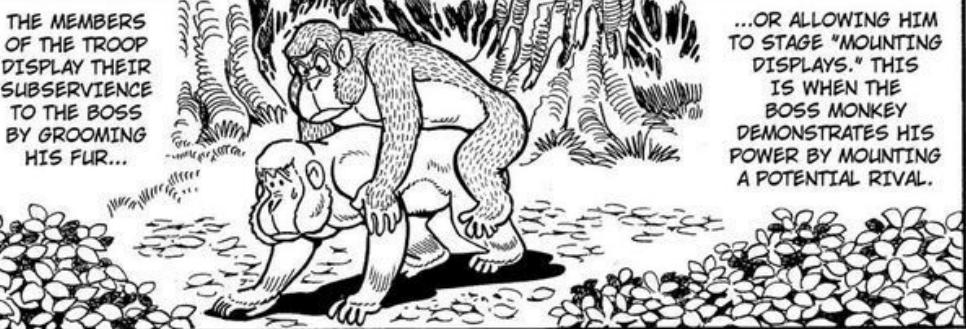




EVEN MONKEY SOCIETY HAS A SHARPLY DEFINED HIERARCHY. THE BOSS OF A TROOP OF MONKEYS IS ALWAYS AT THE FRONT, AND HE TAKES THE BEST FOOD AND SCAVENGED ITEMS FOR HIMSELF.

THE TROOP'S SUBLEADER STAYS AT THE REAR TO PROTECT THE OTHER MEMBERS. NEXT, IN TERMS OF RESPECT, ARE THE FEMALES WHO CARRY THE OFFSPRING.

THE MEMBERS OF THE TROOP DISPLAY THEIR SUBSERVIENCE TO THE BOSS BY GROOMING HIS FUR...



...OR ALLOWING HIM TO STAGE "MOUNTING DISPLAYS." THIS IS WHEN THE BOSS MONKEY DEMONSTRATES HIS POWER BY MOUNTING A POTENTIAL RIVAL.

OUR MONKEY USED ALL HIS STRENGTH AND INTELLECT TO BECOME THE LEADER OF HIS OWN TROOP.

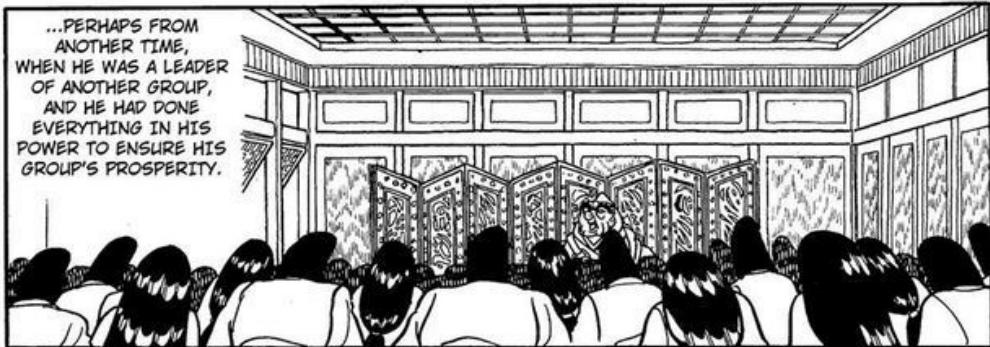


YET FROM TIME TO TIME, A STRANGE, FLEETING MEMORY WOULD COME INTO HIS HEAD...



HE COULD NEVER QUITE IDENTIFY IT, BUT IT SEEMED TO BE A MEMORY FROM LONG, LONG AGO...

...PERHAPS FROM ANOTHER TIME, WHEN HE WAS A LEADER OF ANOTHER GROUP, AND HE HAD DONE EVERYTHING IN HIS POWER TO ENSURE HIS GROUP'S PROSPERITY.



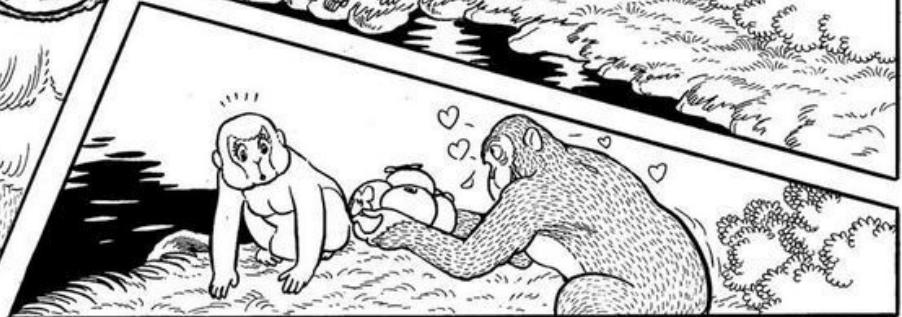
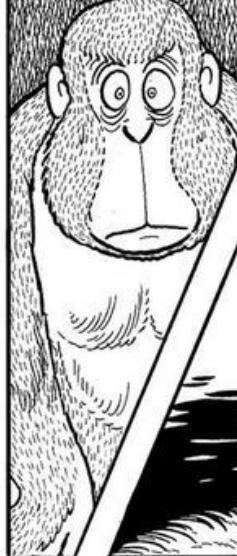
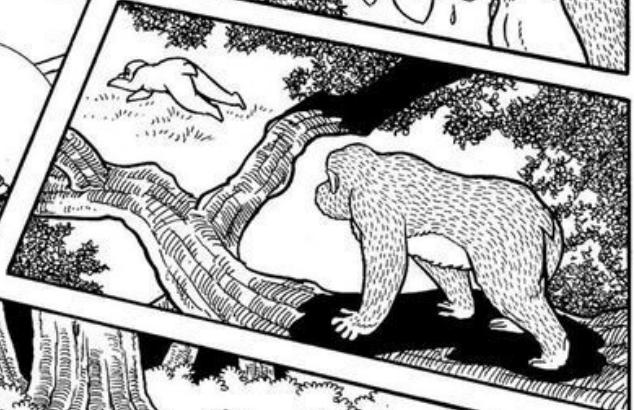
WITH HIS LIMITED MONKEY INTELLECT, HE COULD NOT FULLY COMPREHEND WHAT THIS STRANGE MEMORY OF BEING A LEADER IN ANOTHER TIME AND PLACE REALLY MEANT...

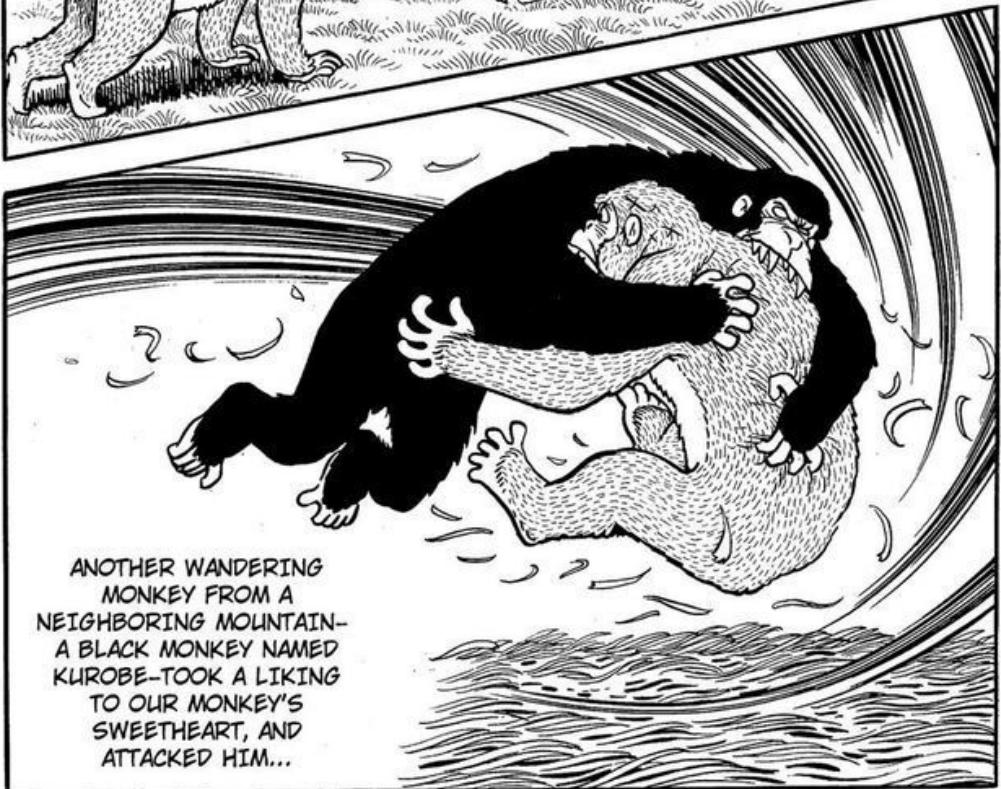
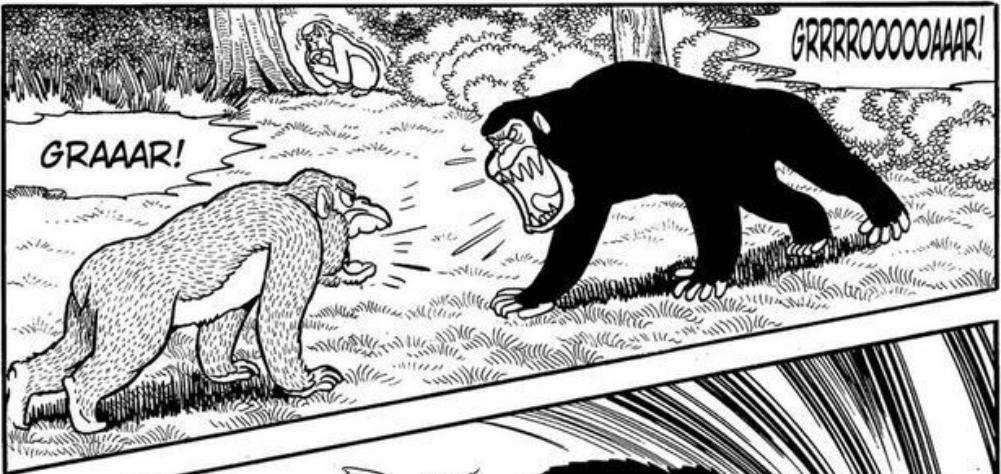
BUT HE DID RECOGNIZE ONE ASPECT OF IT, AND THAT WAS THE LOVE HE HAD FOR A CERTAIN YOUNG FEMALE...

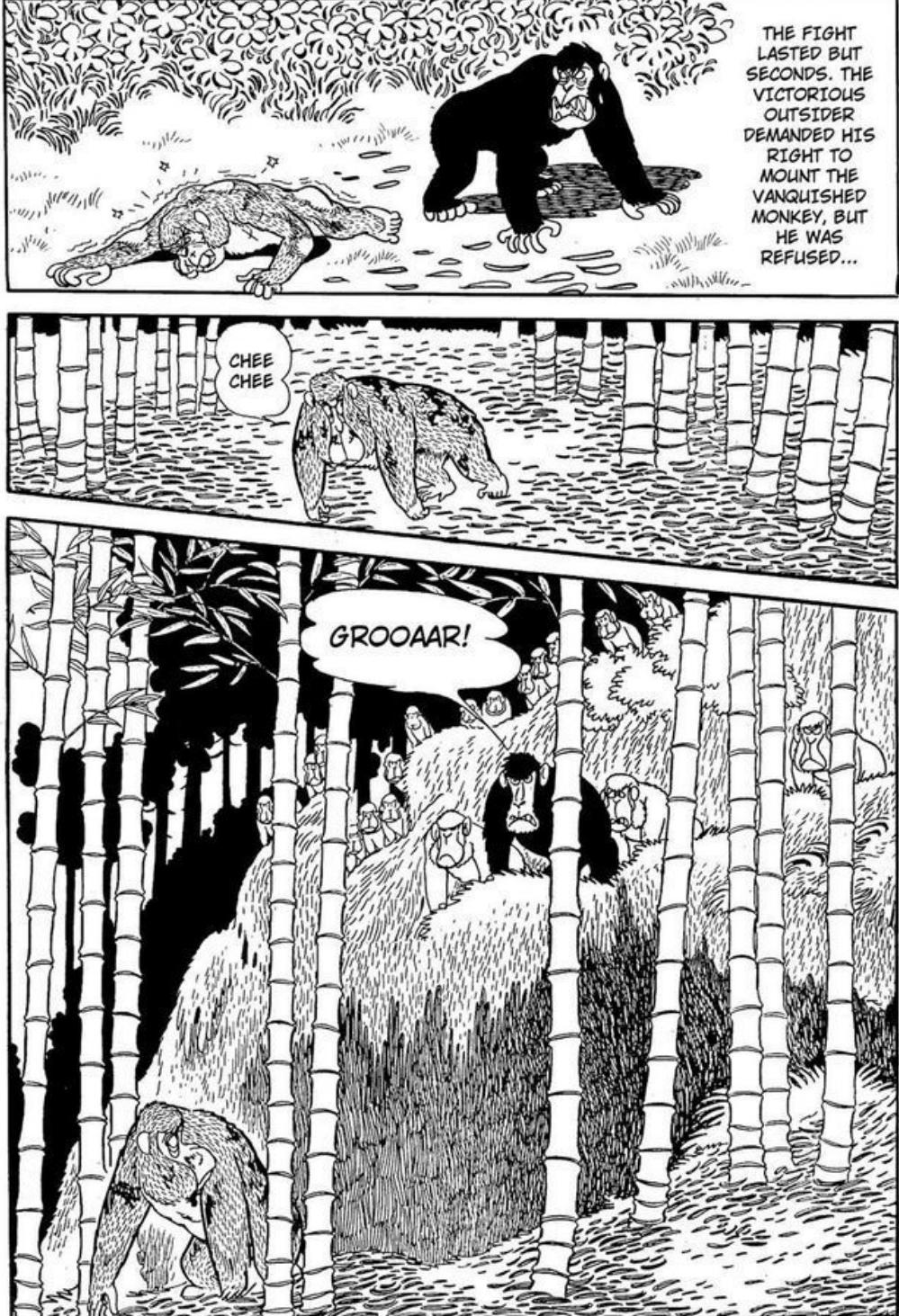
THIS MONKEY WAS SHROUNDED BY LOTS OF ATTRACTIVE FEMALE MONKEYS... BUT...



...HE HAD EYES FOR ONLY ONE...





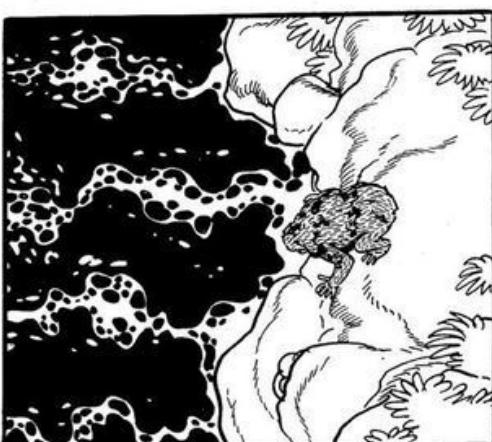
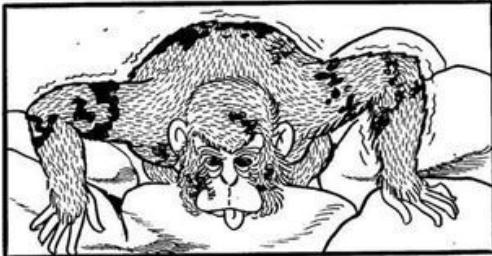
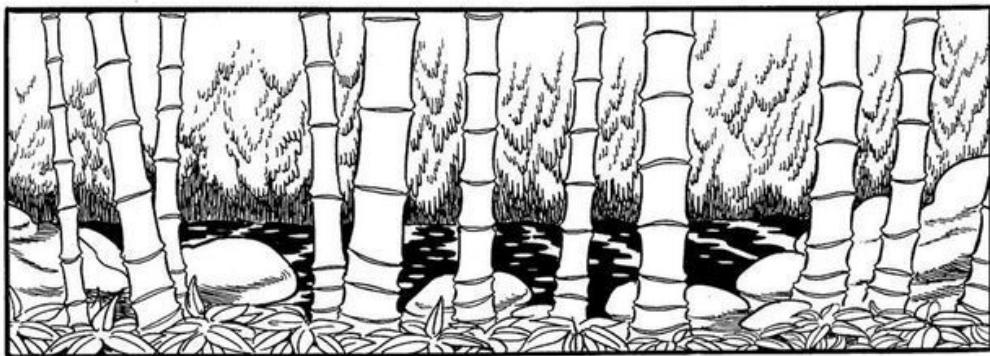


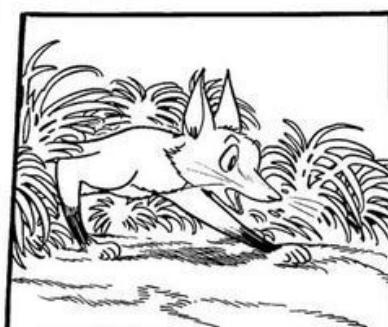
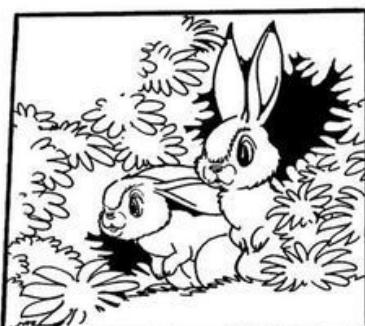
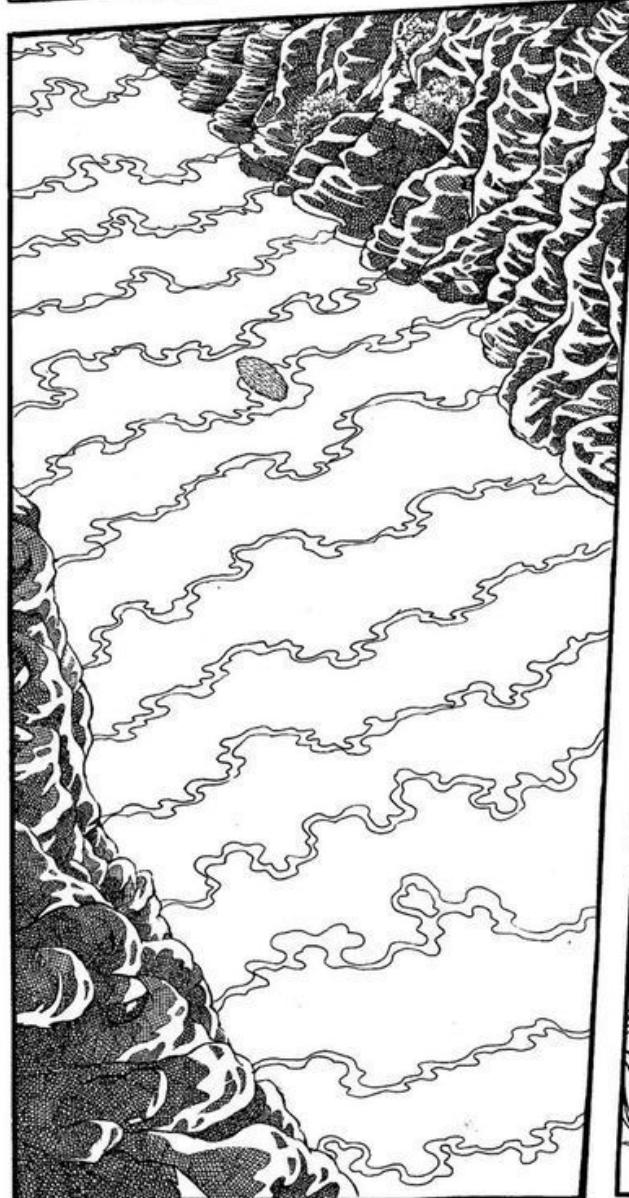
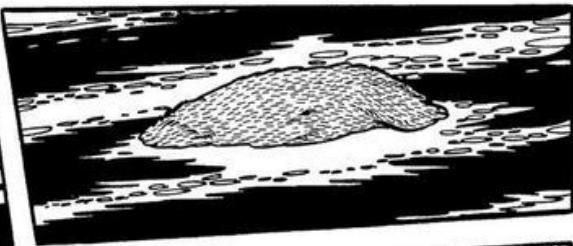
THE FIGHT LASTED BUT SECONDS. THE VICTORIOUS OUTSIDER DEMANDED HIS RIGHT TO MOUNT THE VANQUISHED MONKEY, BUT HE WAS REFUSED...

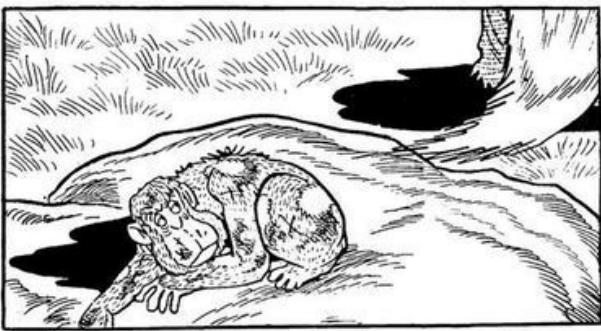
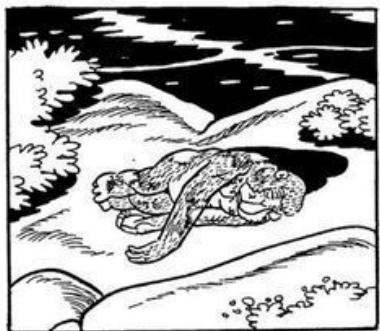
CHEE
CHEE

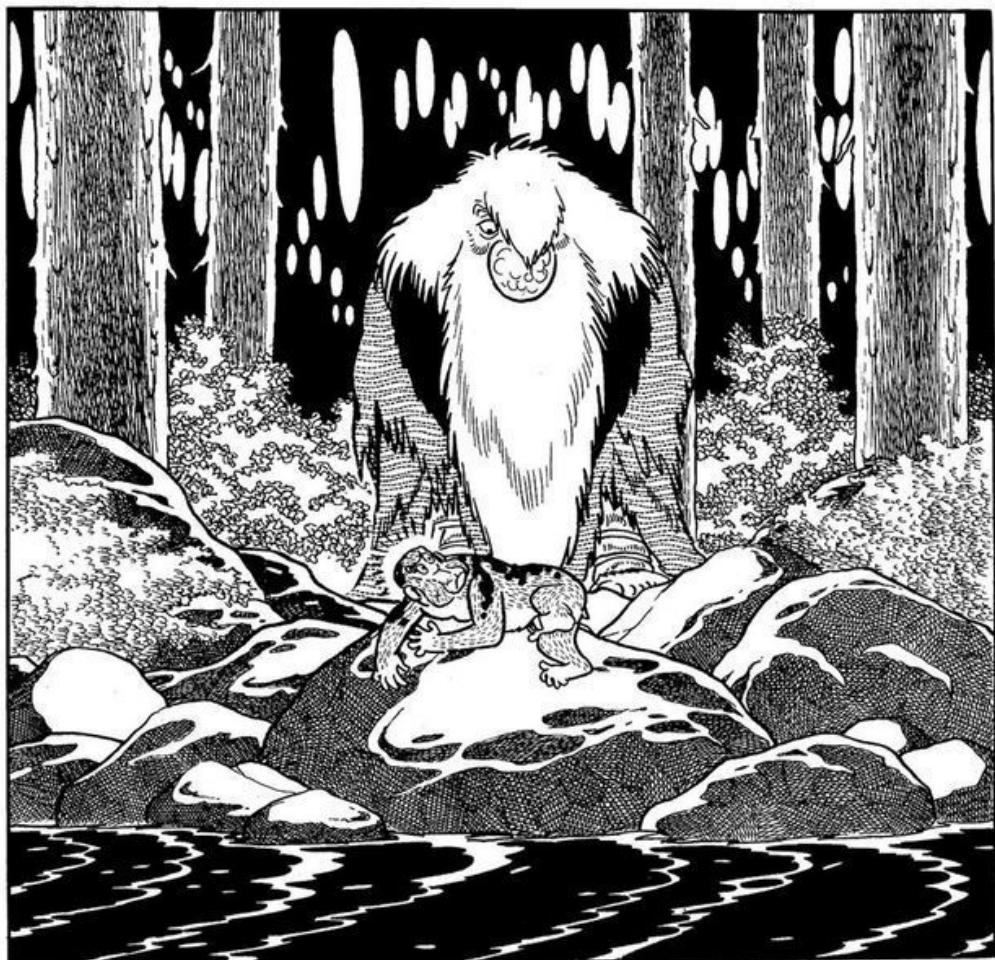
GROOAAR!

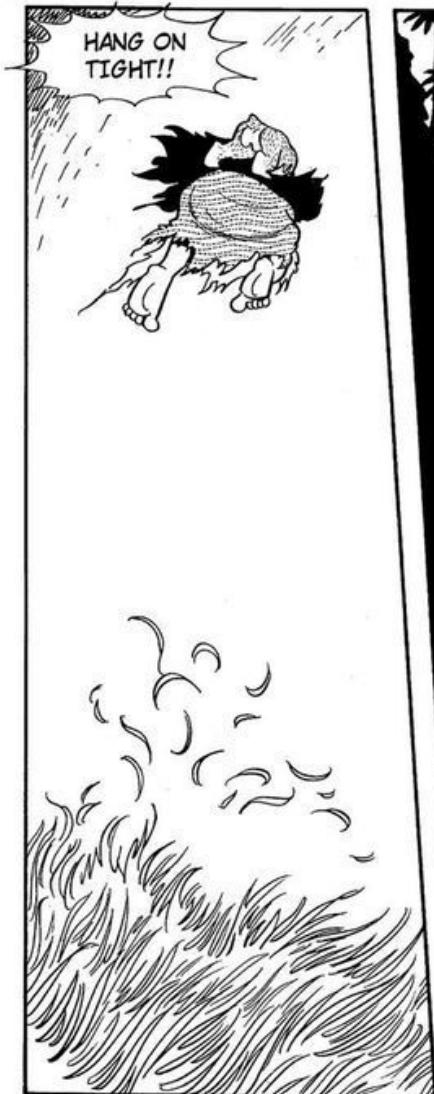


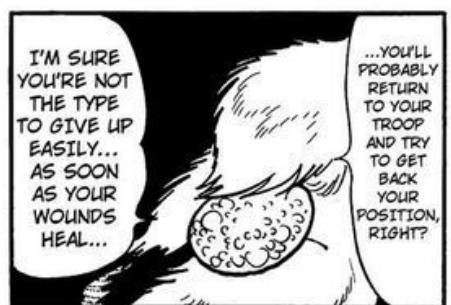
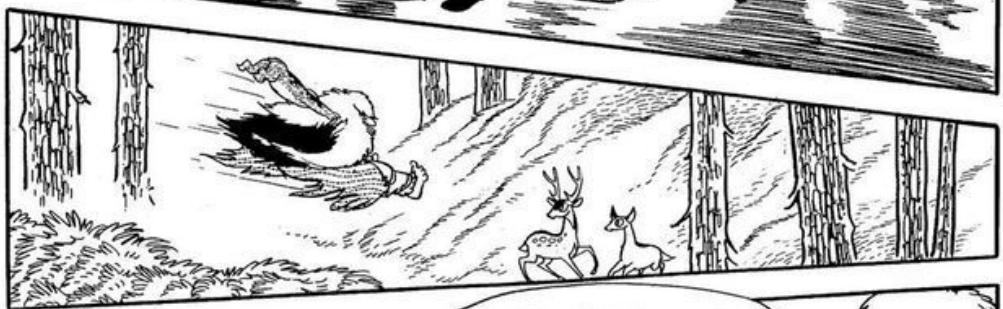


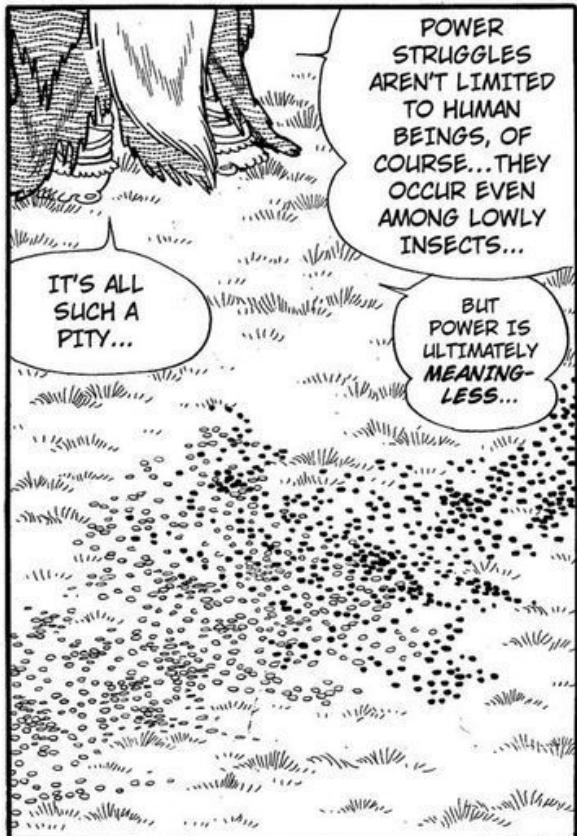


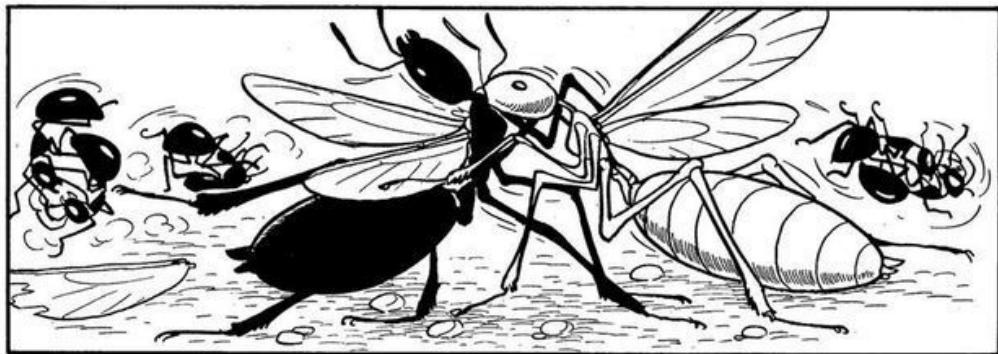


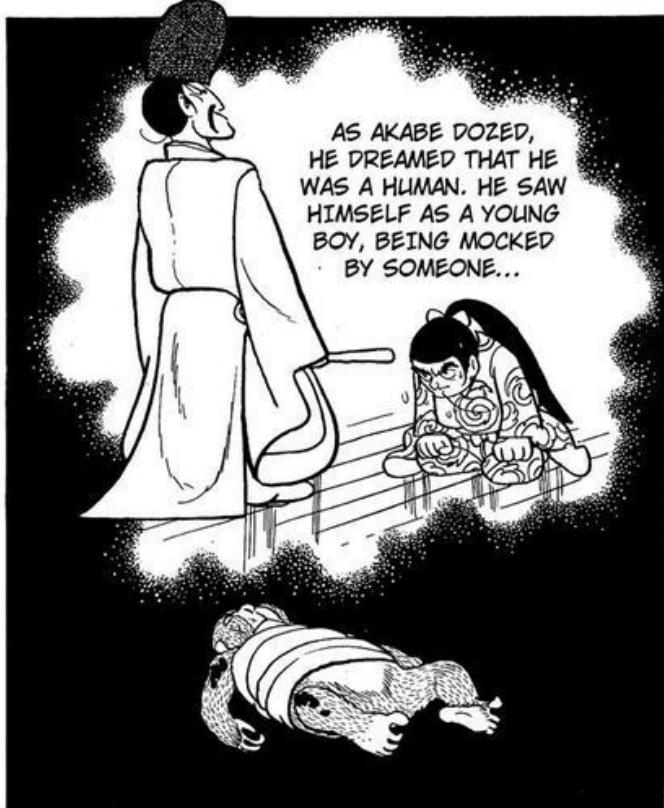
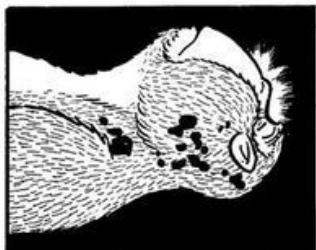
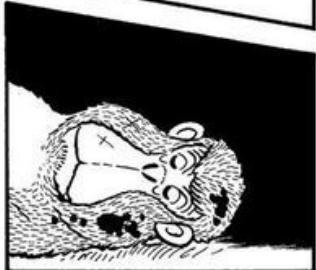


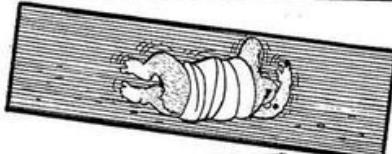
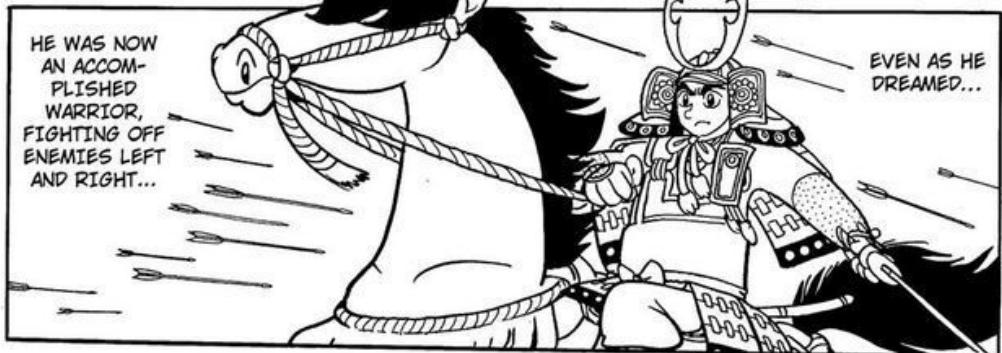
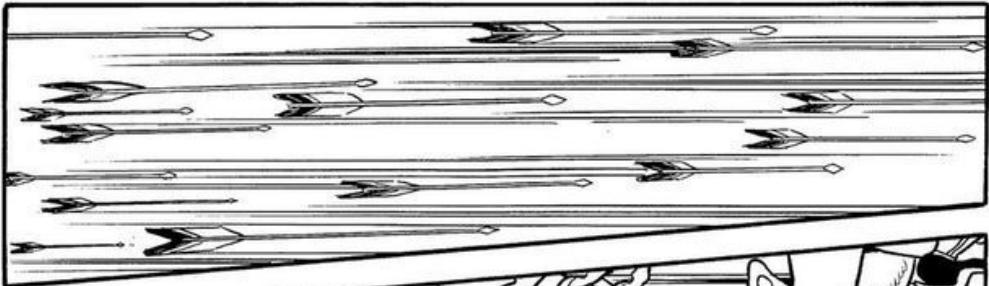




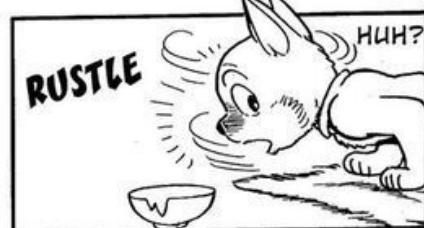
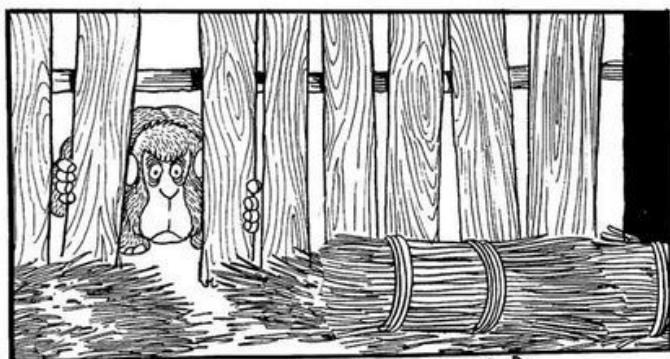


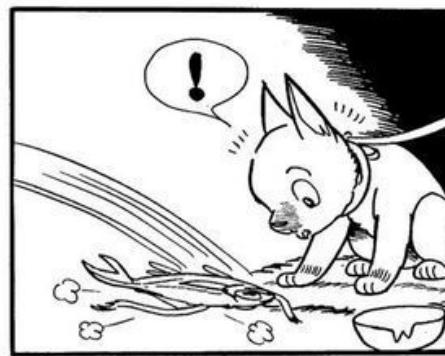
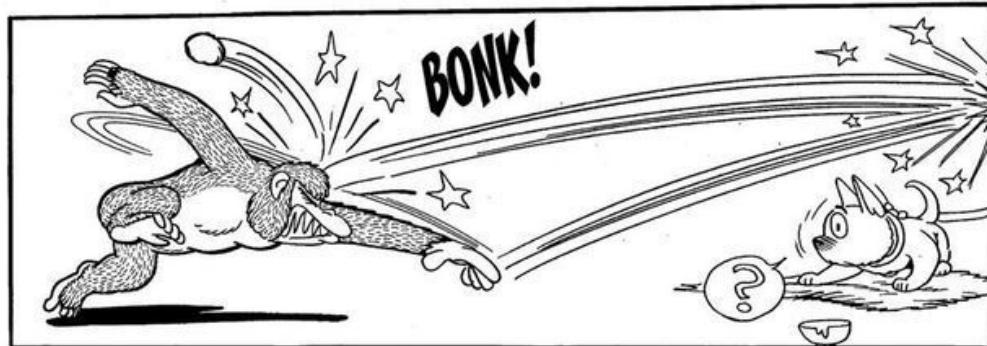
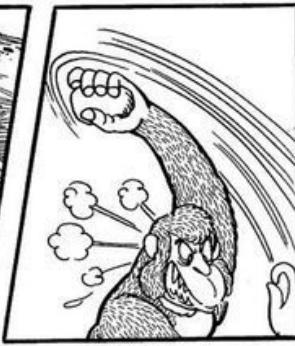
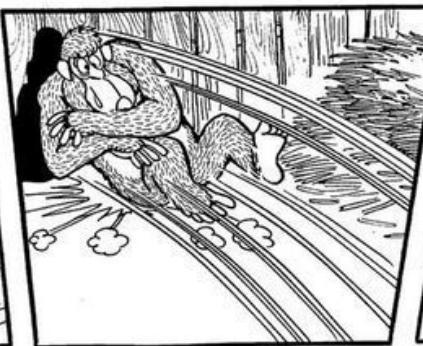


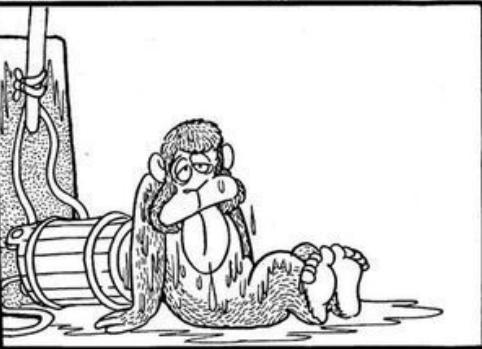
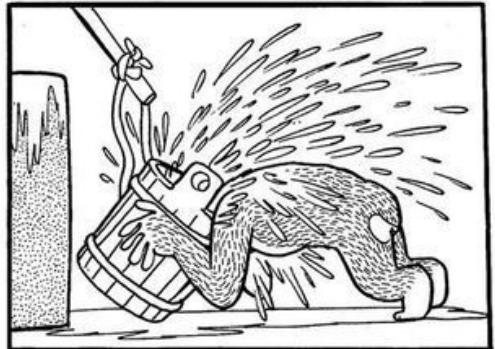
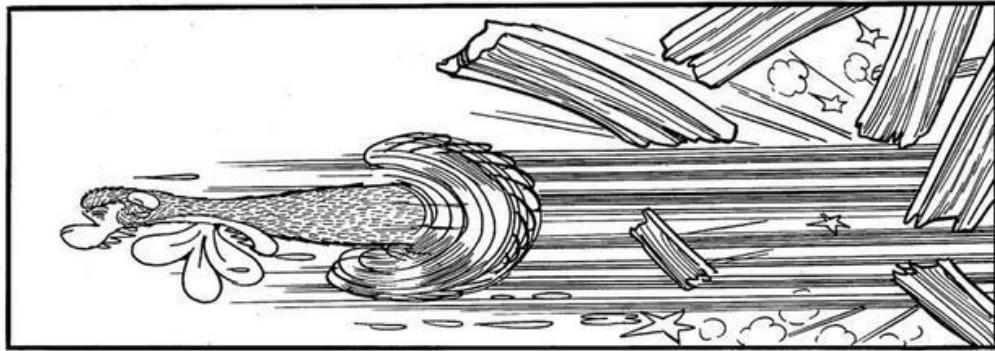
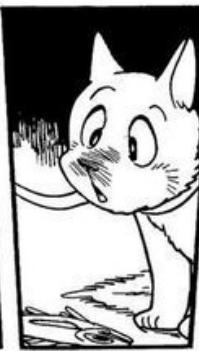
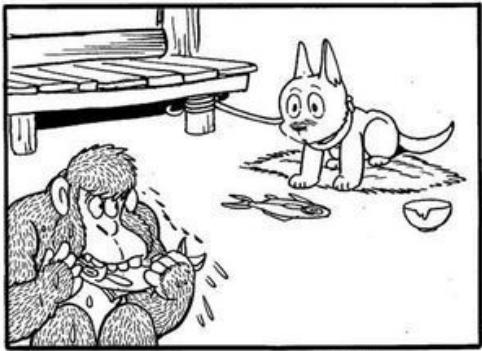
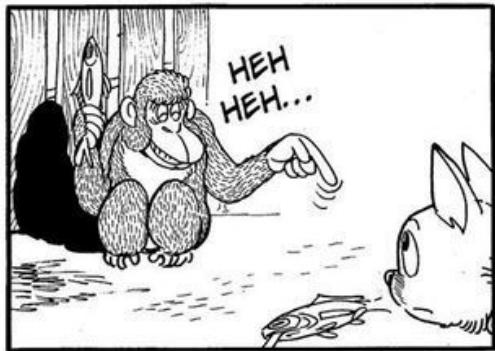


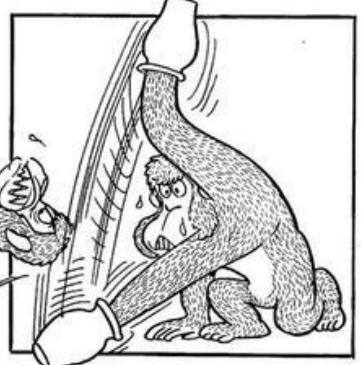
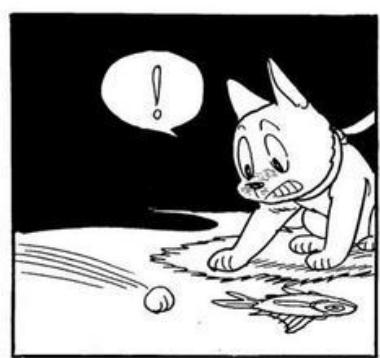
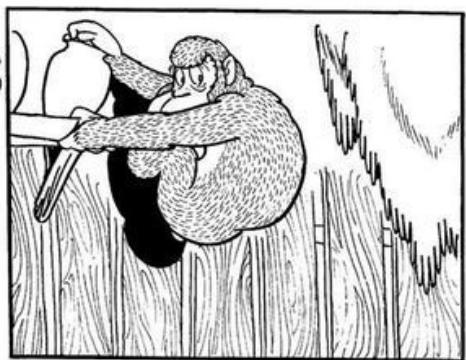
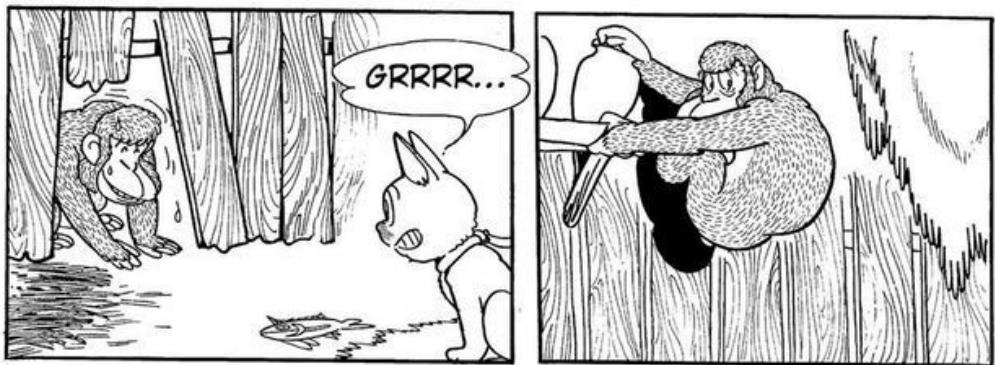


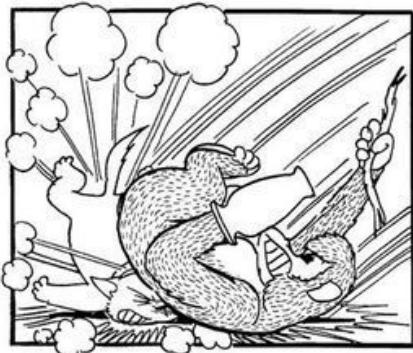
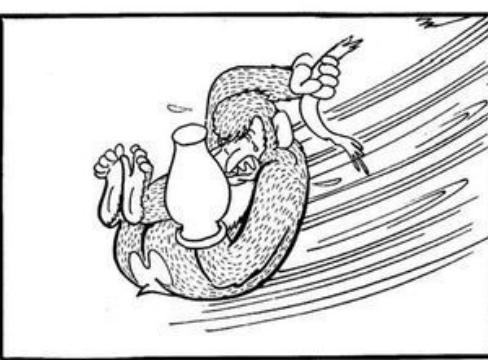
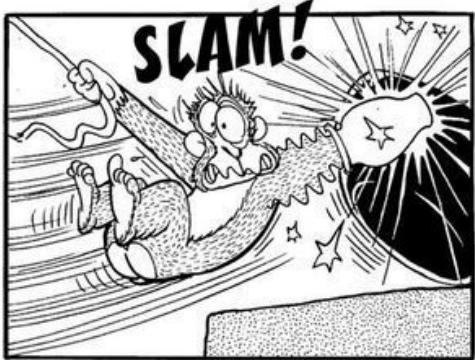
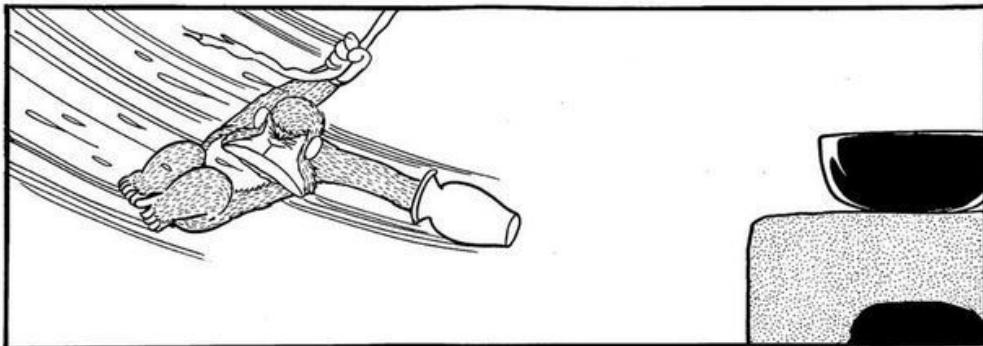
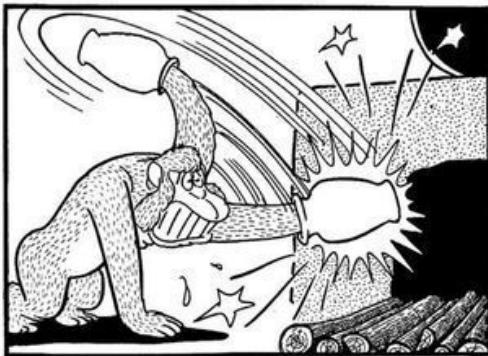
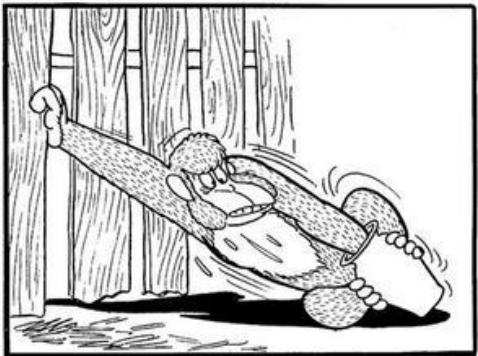


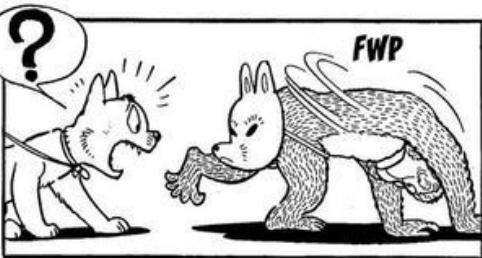


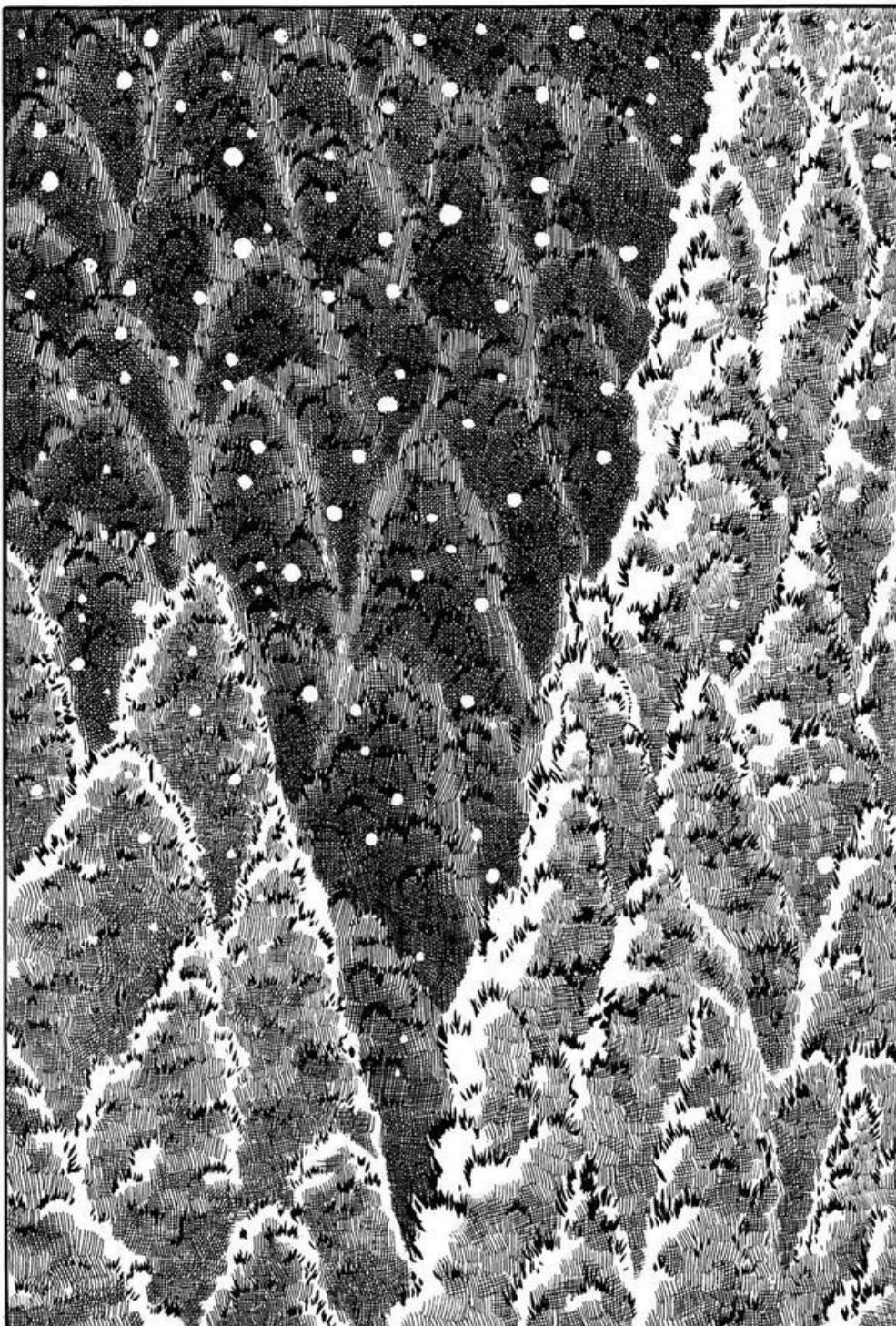




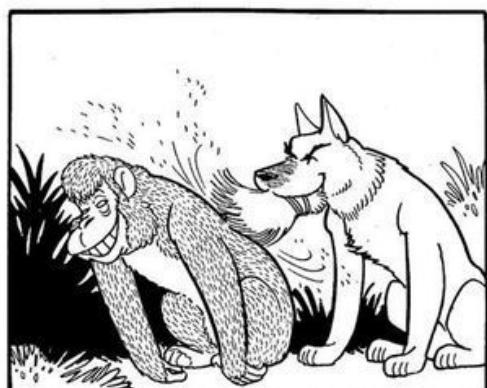
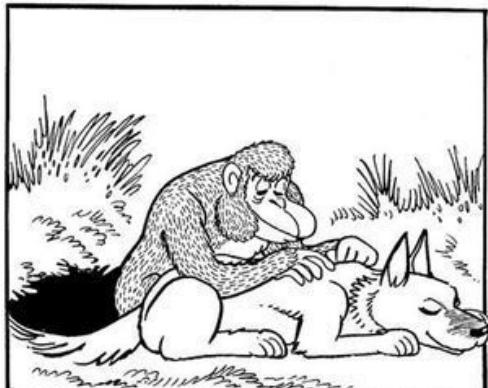


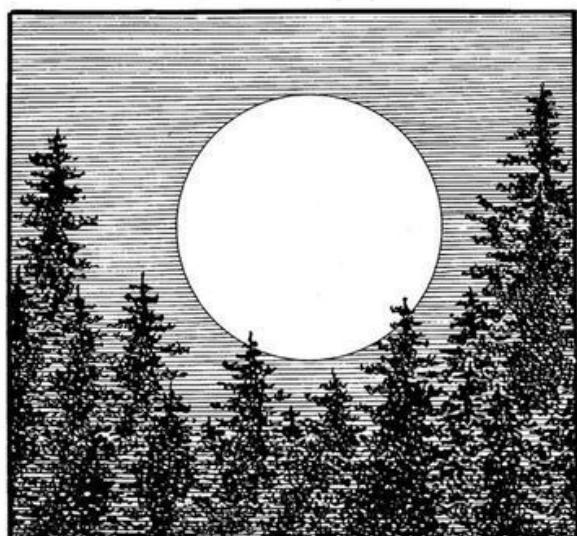
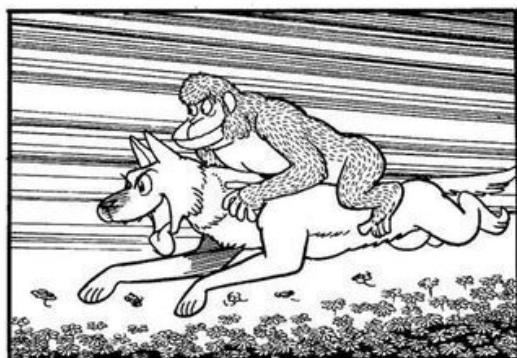
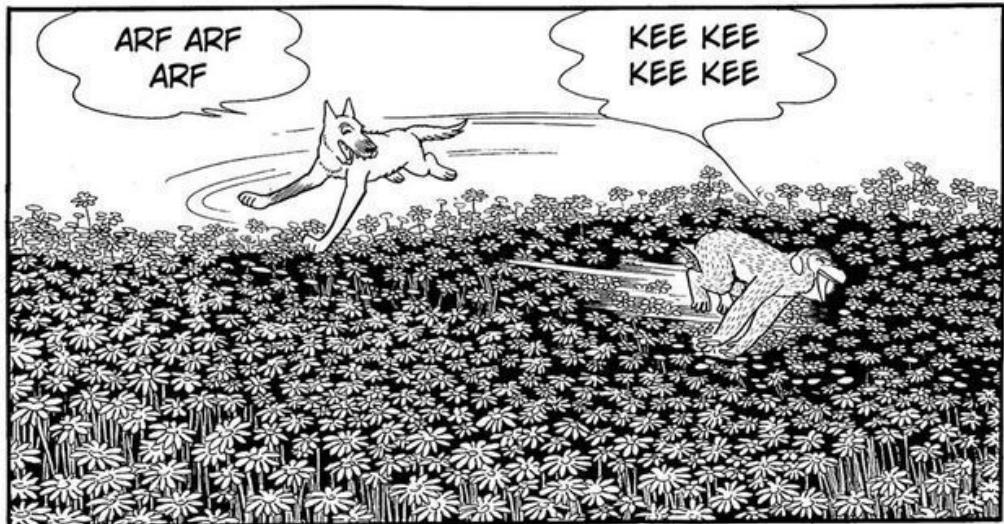


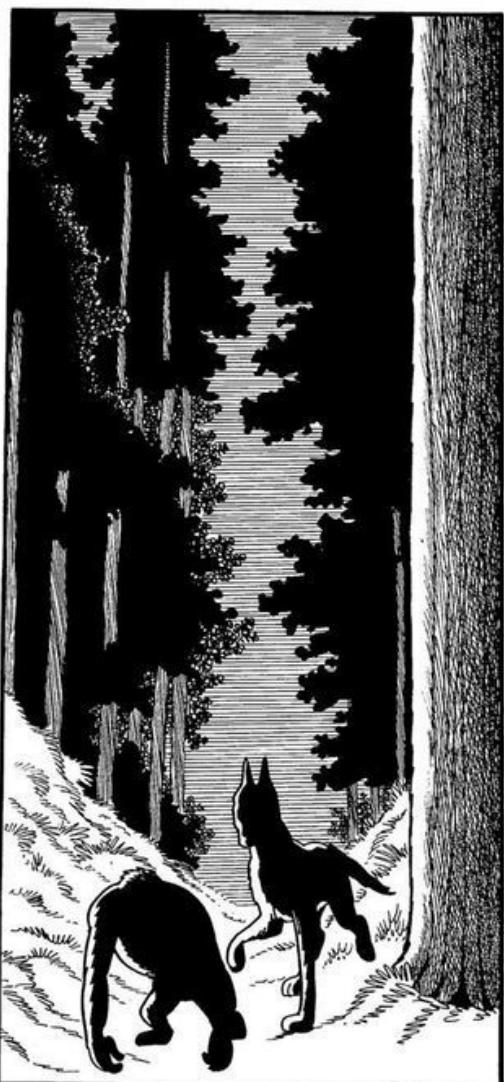
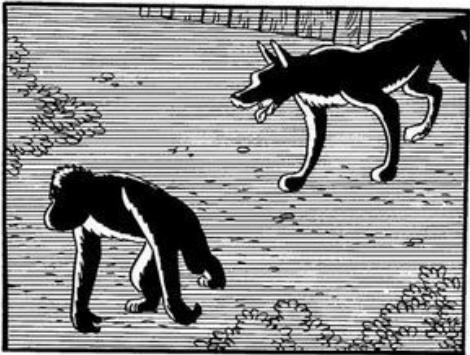








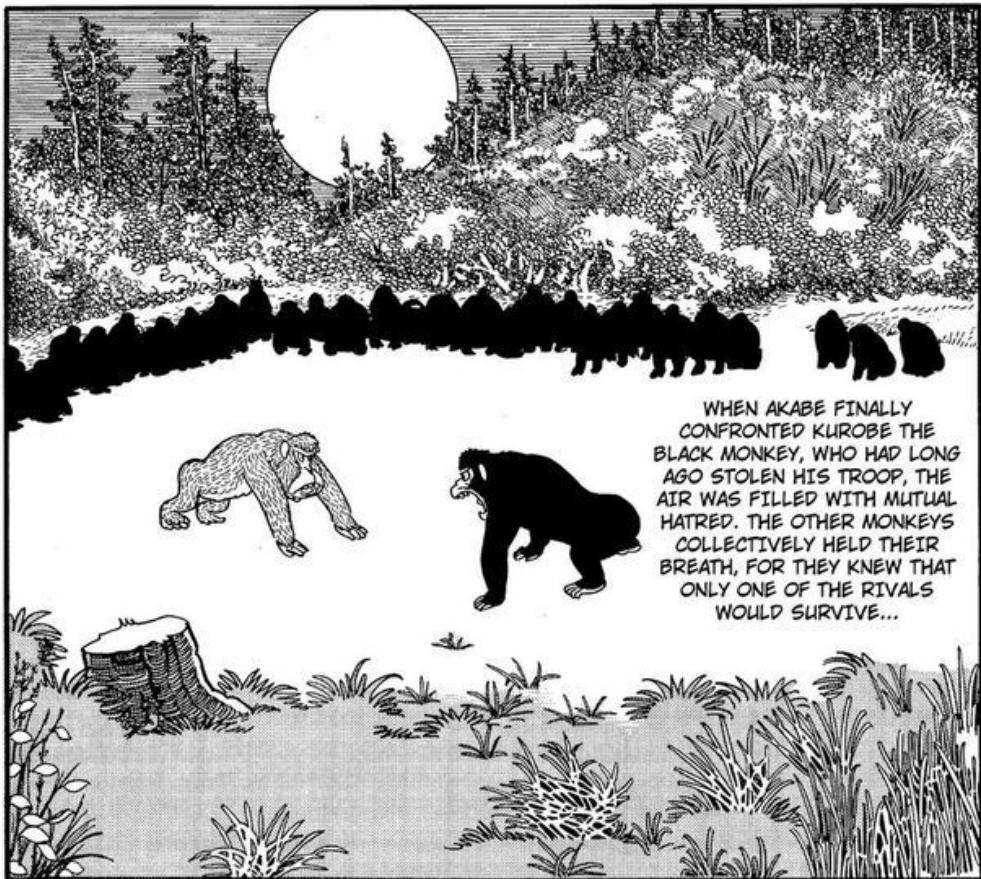




ONE NIGHT,
WITH SHIROBE
FOLLOWING,
AKABE TOOK OFF
INTO THE
MOUNTAINS...
IT WAS FINALLY
TIME FOR HIM TO
PUT INTO EFFECT
THE PLAN THAT
HE HAD HATCHED
OVER A YEAR
AGO. THERE WAS
A REASON THAT
HE HAD WORKED
DAY AND NIGHT
TO UNDERSTAND
THE DOG AND
BECOME HIS
FRIEND...





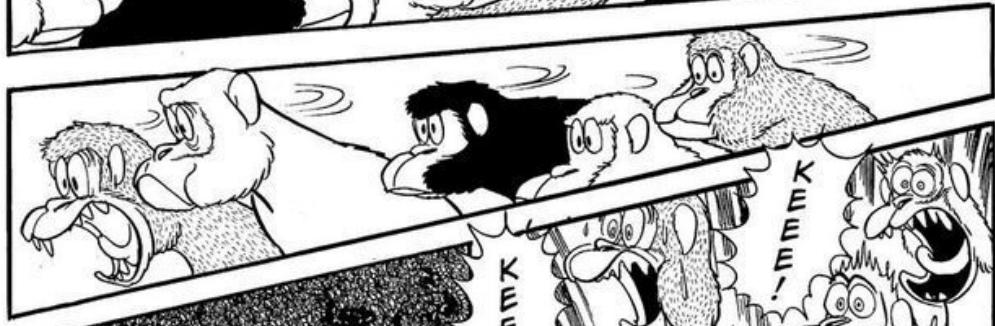
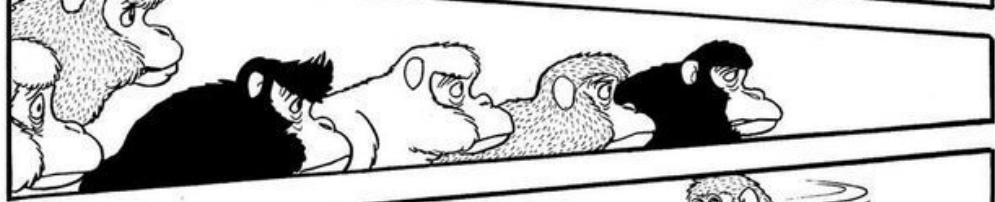


WHEN AKABE FINALLY CONFRONTED KUROBE THE BLACK MONKEY, WHO HAD LONG AGO STOLEN HIS TROOP, THE AIR WAS FILLED WITH MUTUAL HATRED. THE OTHER MONKEYS COLLECTIVELY HELD THEIR BREATH, FOR THEY KNEW THAT ONLY ONE OF THE RIVALS WOULD SURVIVE...



IN SUCH A MATCH, WHICHEVER MONKEY FIRST SINKS HIS FANGS INTO THE OTHER'S THROAT IS THE VICTOR... BUT AKABE HAD A PLAN-A STRATEGY THAT WOULD GIVE HIM A SPLIT-SECOND ADVANTAGE OVER HIS OPPONENT...







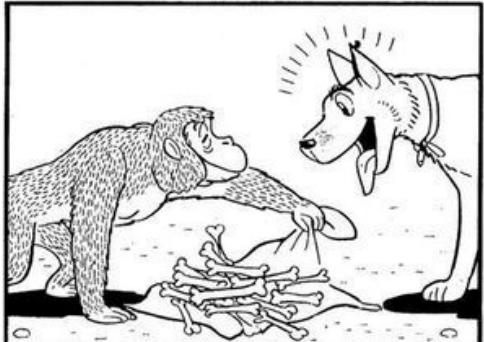
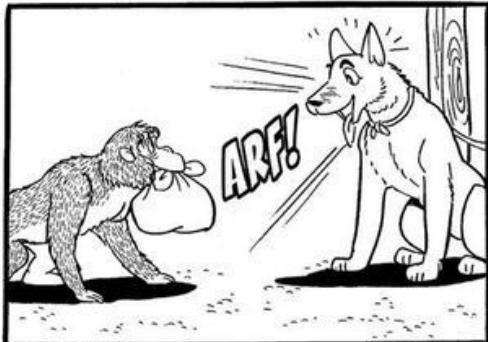
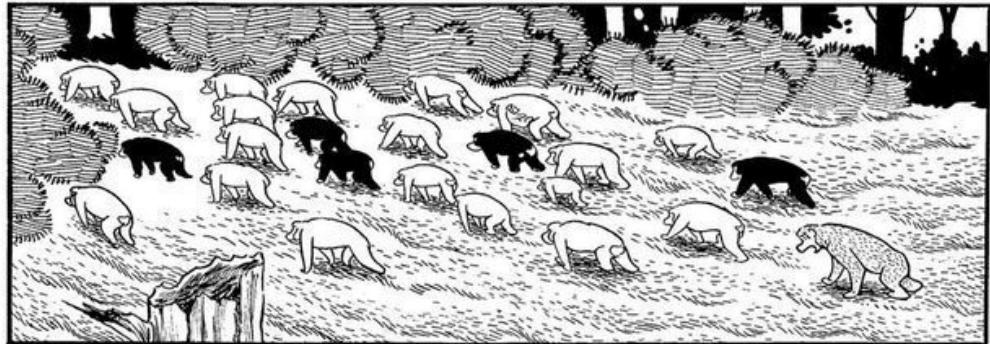
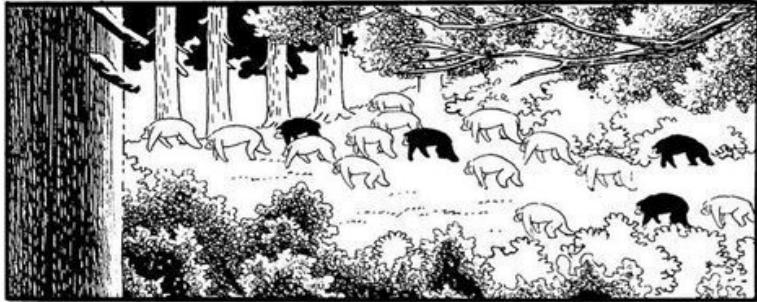
IT WAS ALL
OVER IN A
FLASH...
WHILE THE
ENTIRE
TROOP'S
ATTENTION WAS
DIVERTED BY
SHIROBE'S
SUDDEN
APPEARANCE,
AKABE STRUCK,
SINKING HIS
TEETH INTO
HIS RIVAL'S
THROAT.

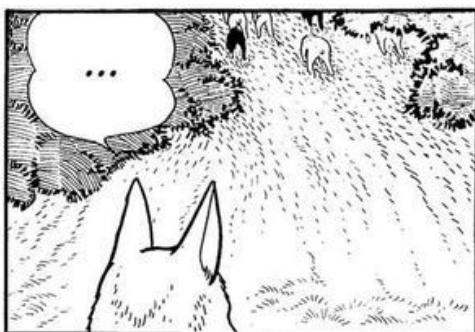
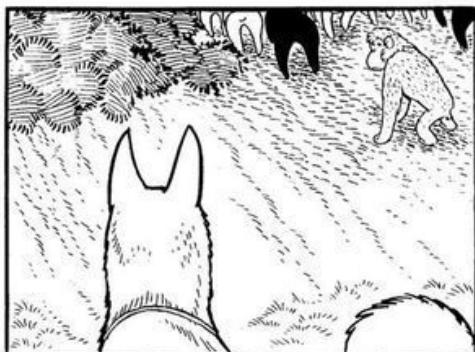


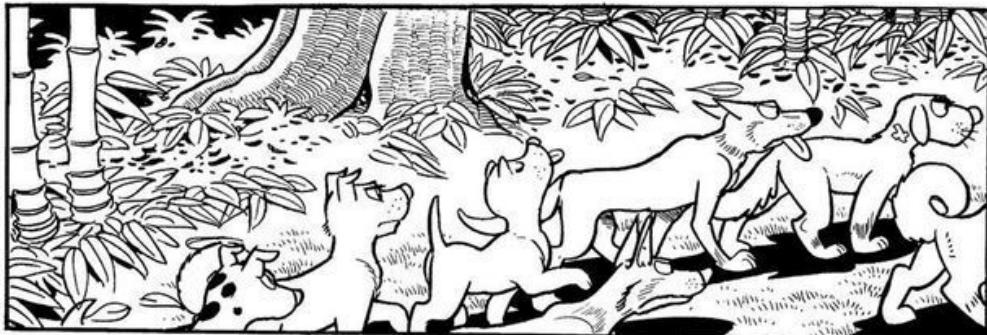
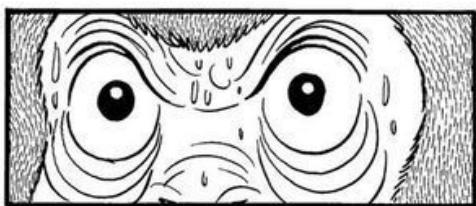


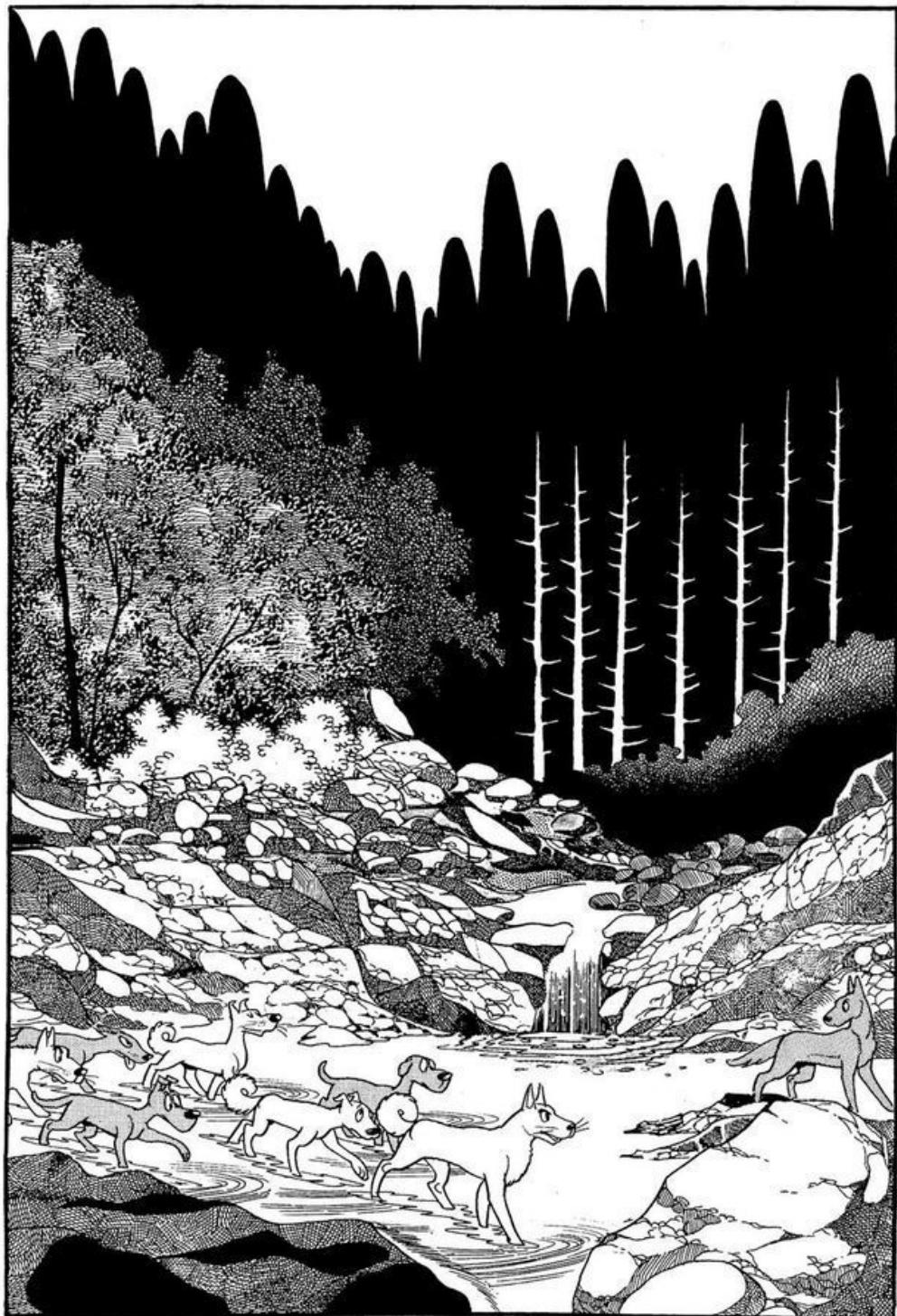


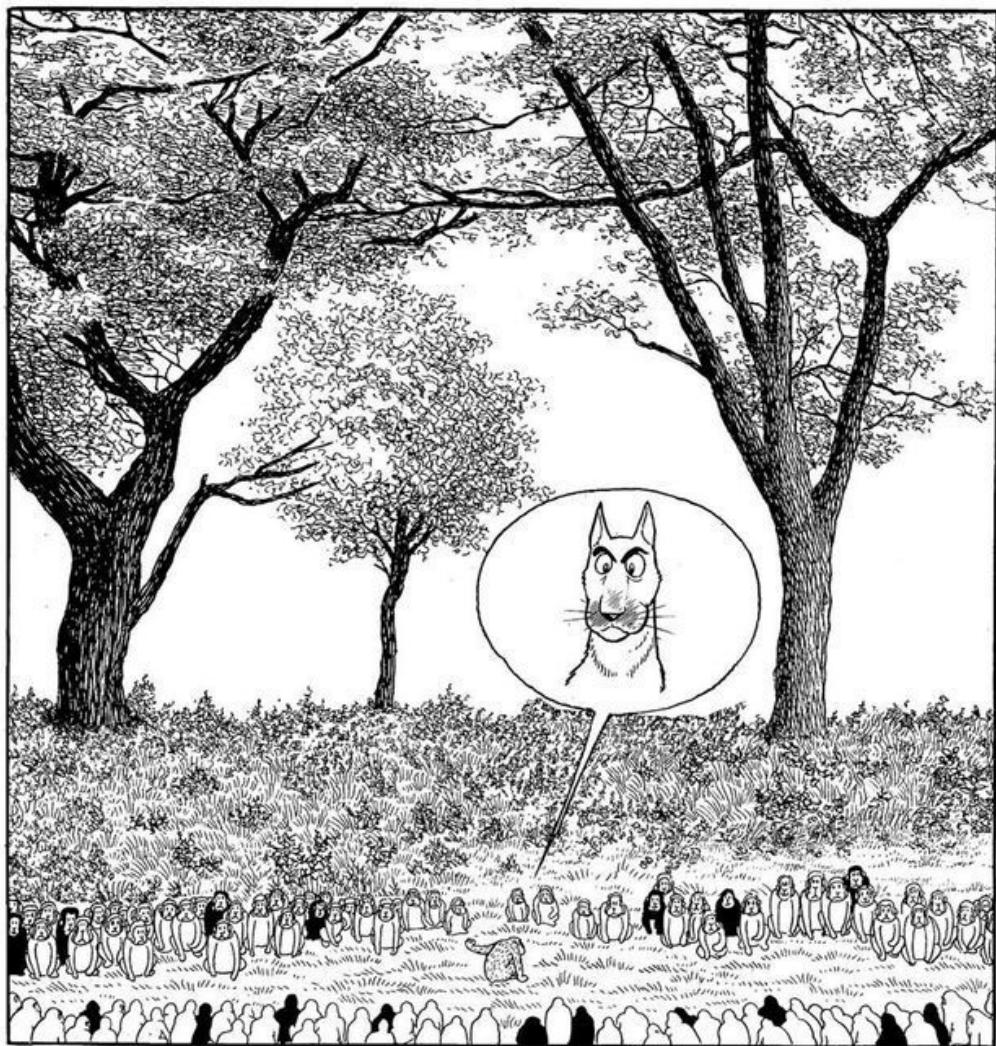
AS THE NEW LEADER OF THE TROOP, THE FIRST THING AKABE DID WAS TO VISIT HIS OLD FRIEND, SHIROBE, AND EXPRESS HIS GRATITUDE.

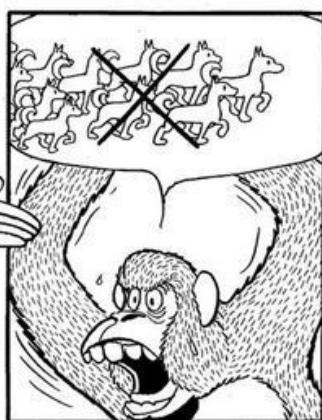
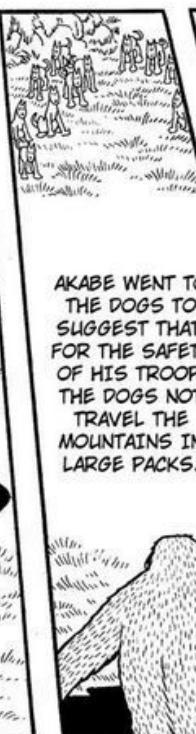


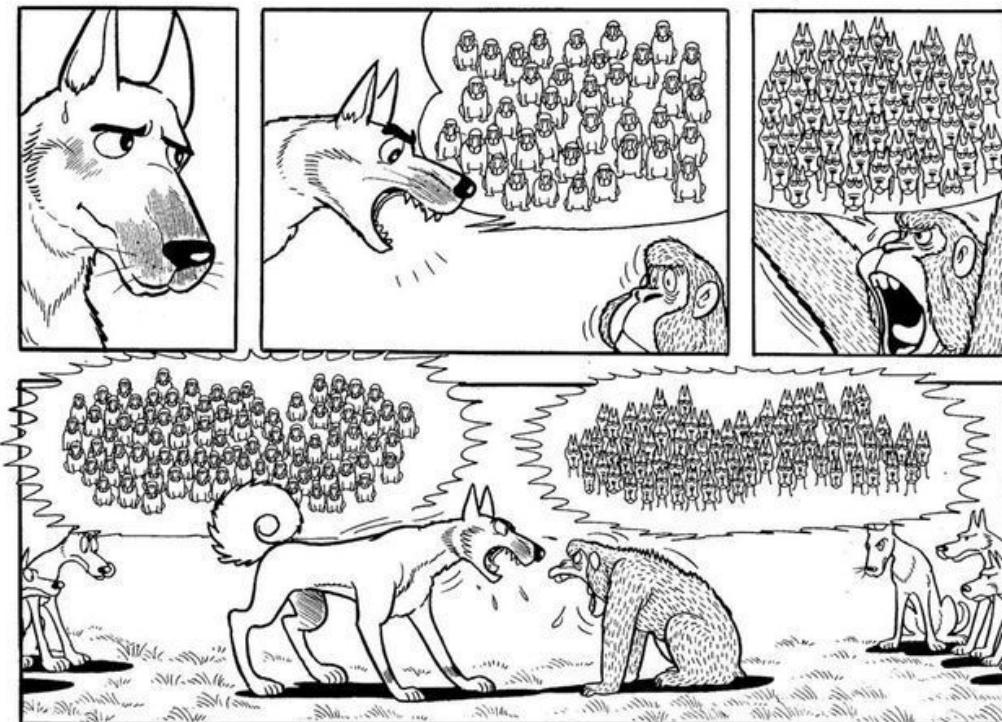






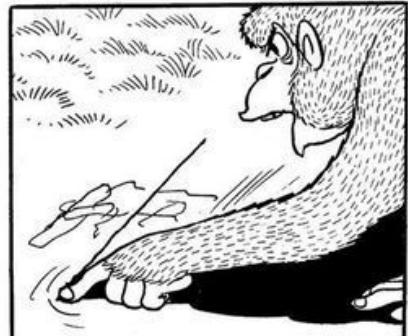


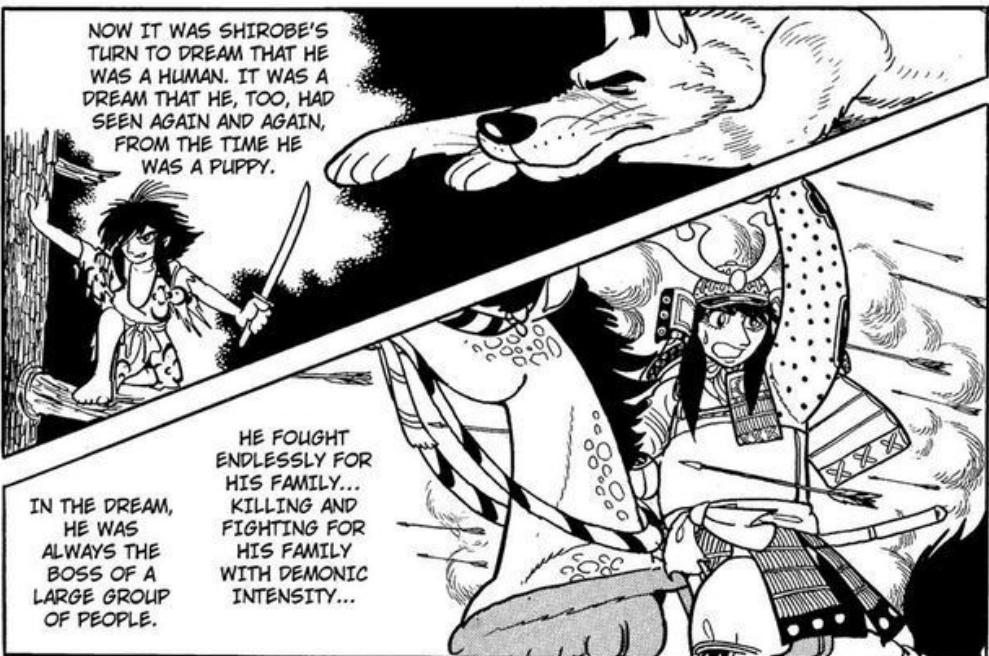
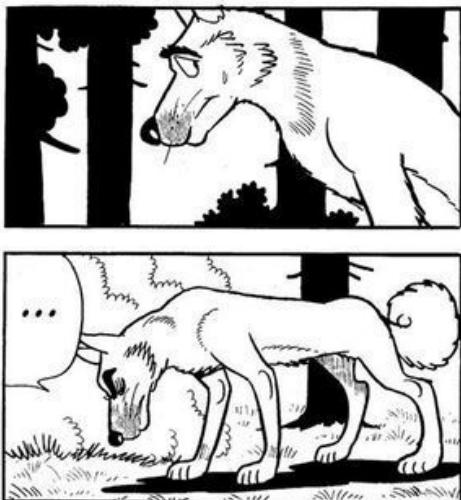




THE TWO ARGUED
OVER THE SIZE OF
EACH OTHER'S GROUP.
AND, UNABLE TO
RESOLVE THEIR
DIFFERENCES, AKABE
PROPOSED THEY
DRAW A LINE AND
SEPARATE THEIR
TERRITORIES.

BUT, NEITHER
OF THEM COULD
AGREE WHERE
THE BOUNDARY
SHOULD BE
DRAWN...



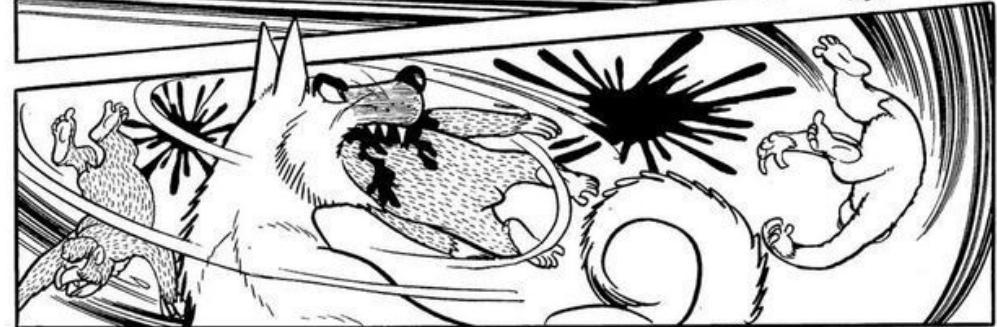
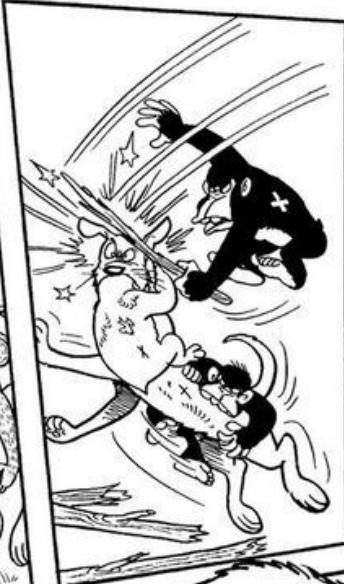
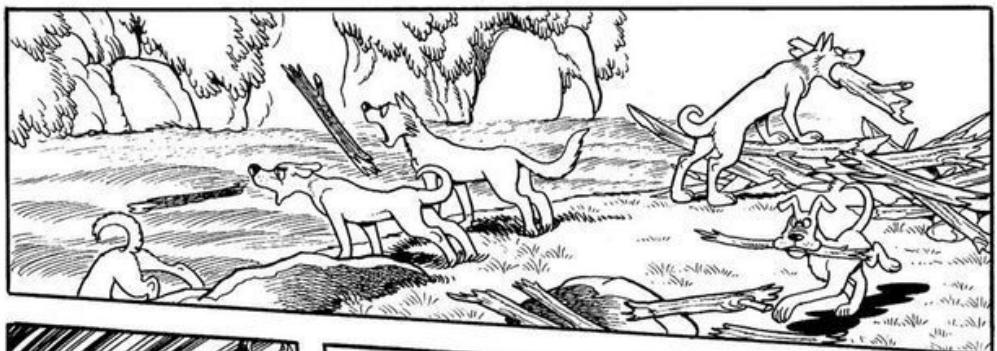


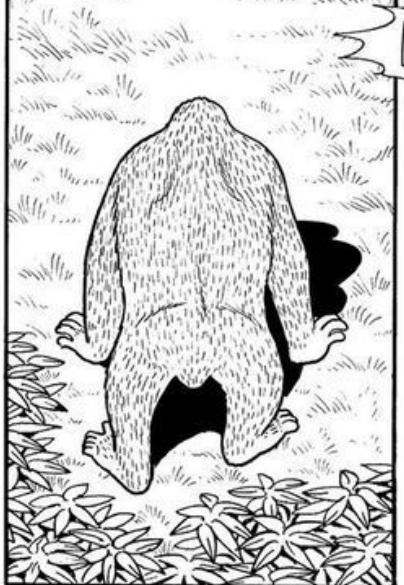
AND SO SHIROBE REASONED THAT, AS BOSS OF HIS FAMILY, HE HAD TO PROTECT HIS TERRITORY... FOR THE SAKE OF HIS CHILDREN AND HIS FOLLOWERS.

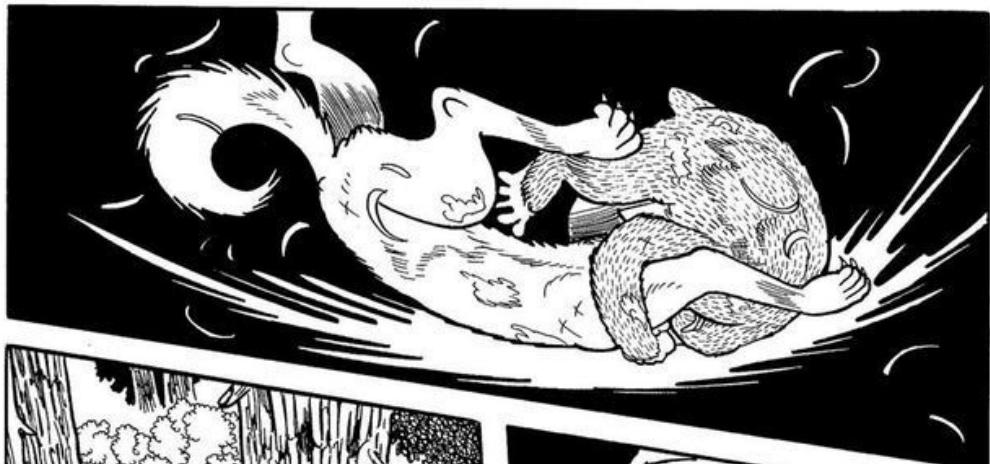
HE RAN OFF TO SEE AKABE, TO DISCUSS DRAWING A TERRITORIAL BORDER.

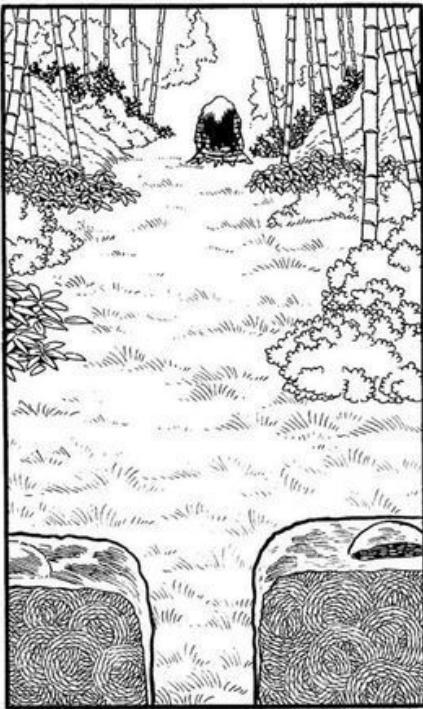
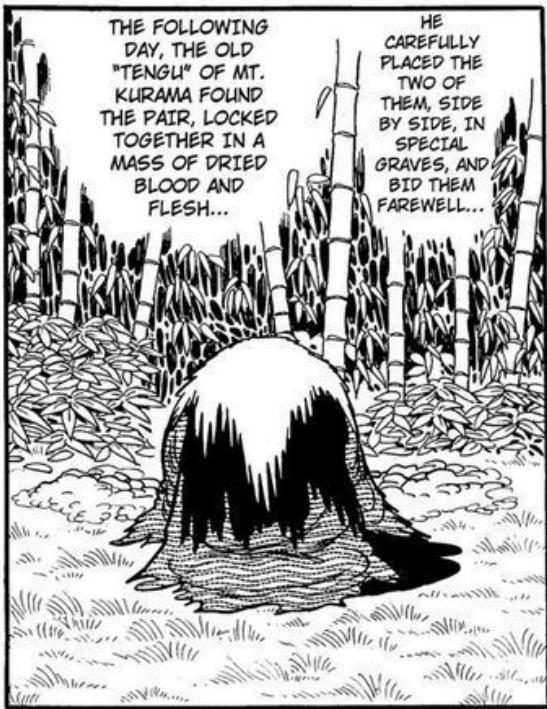
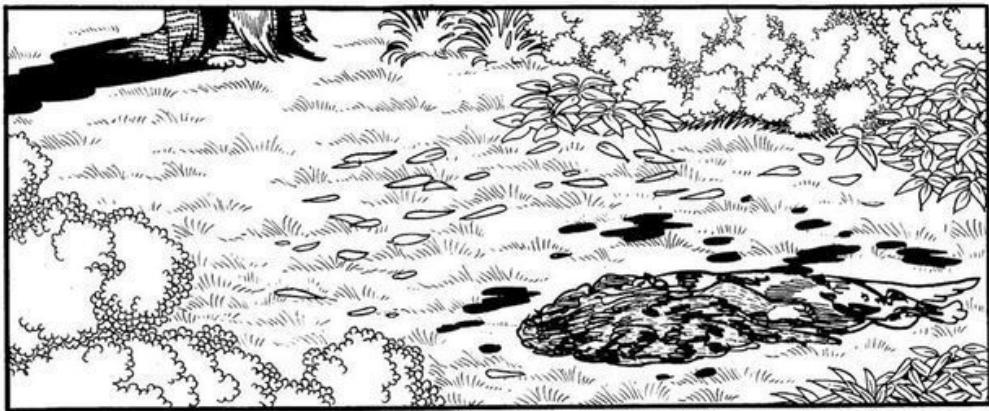


TO HIS DISMAY, SHIROBE FOUND THAT AKABE'S TROOP HAD BLOCKED THE PATHS ALL AROUND THE MOUNTAIN. UNDAUNTED, HE ORDERED HIS FOLLOWERS TO CLEAR THE WAY. AND THAT IS WHEN THE REAL TROUBLE BEGAN...





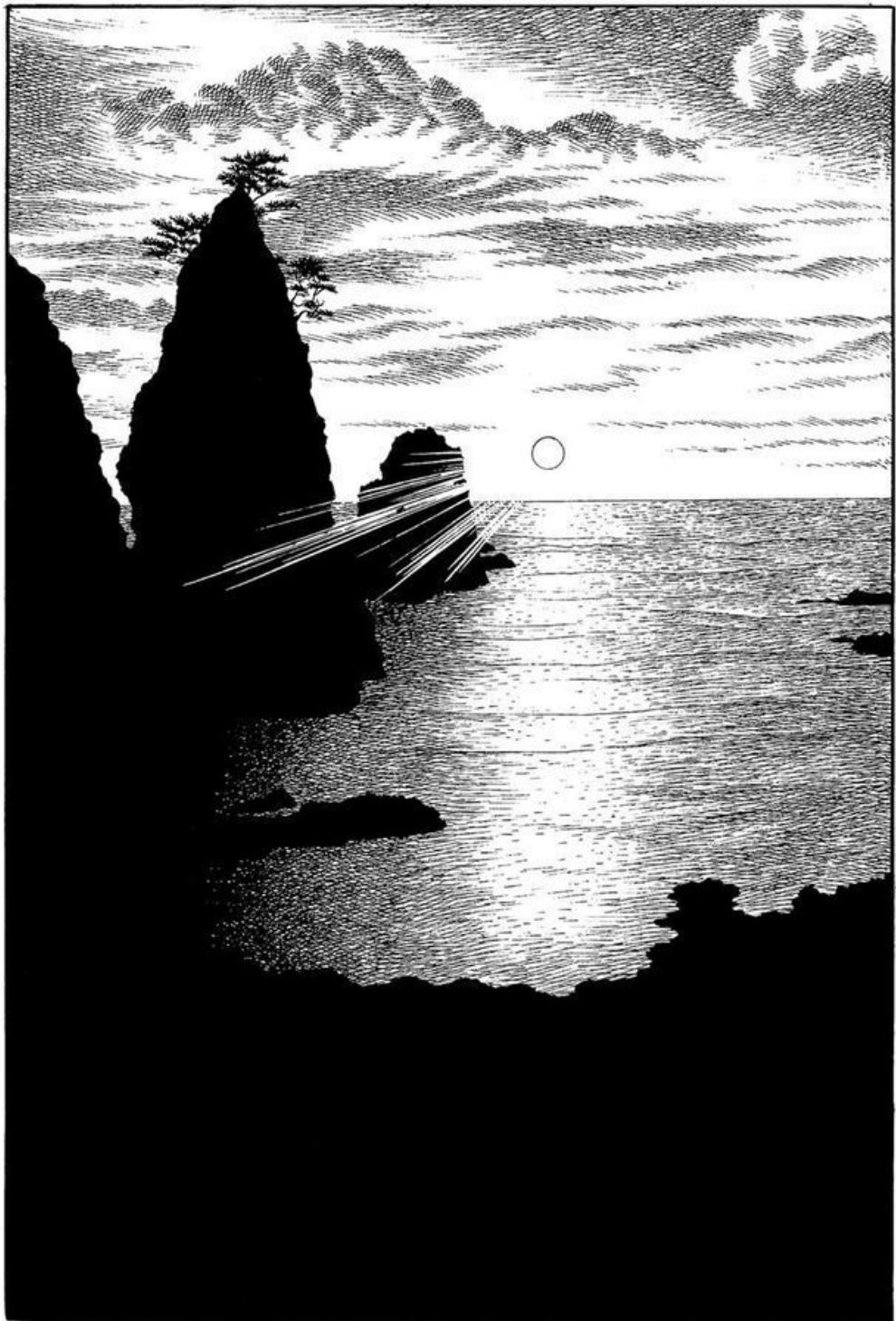






THE SOULS OF
THE TWO ANIMALS
DIFFUSED INTO
THE VASTNESS
OF SPACE...

...TO WAIT...FOR
WHEN IT WOULD
BE THEIR TIME
TO BE REBORN
ONCE AGAIN...

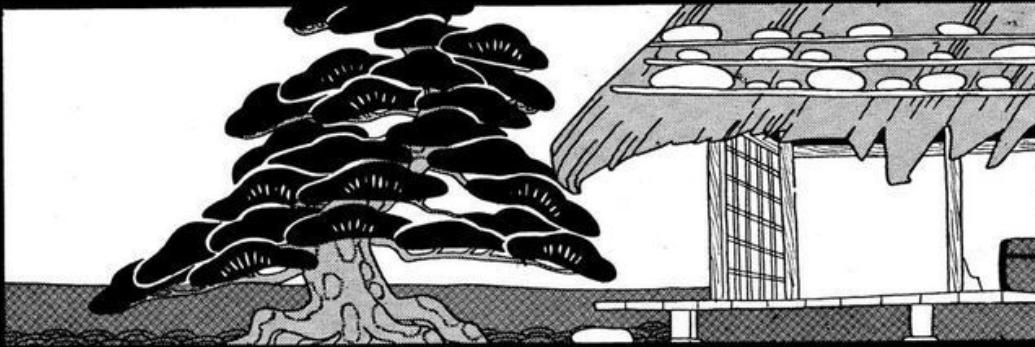
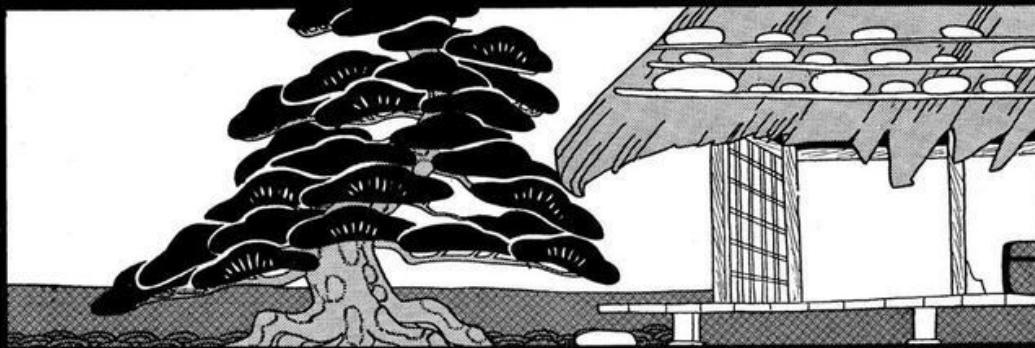
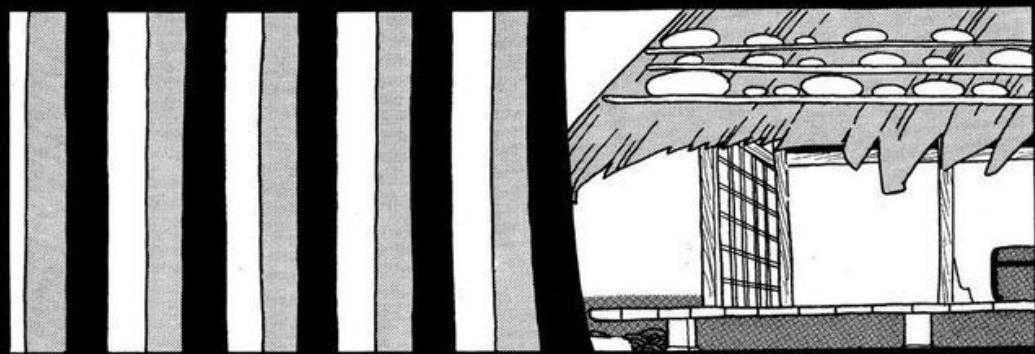
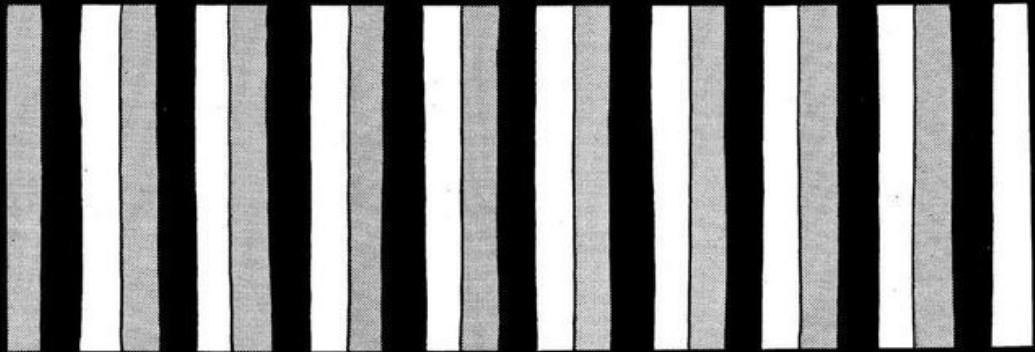


ROBE OF FEATHERS







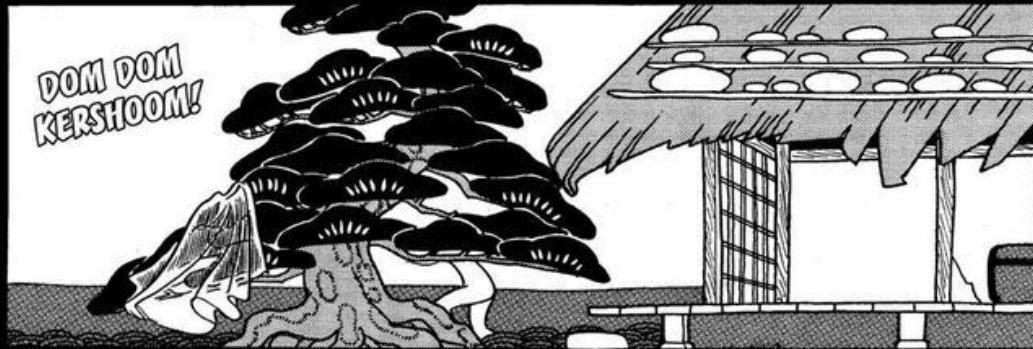
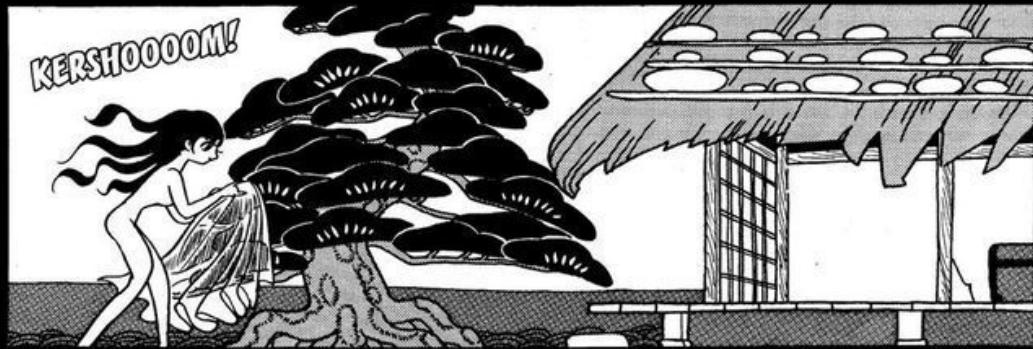
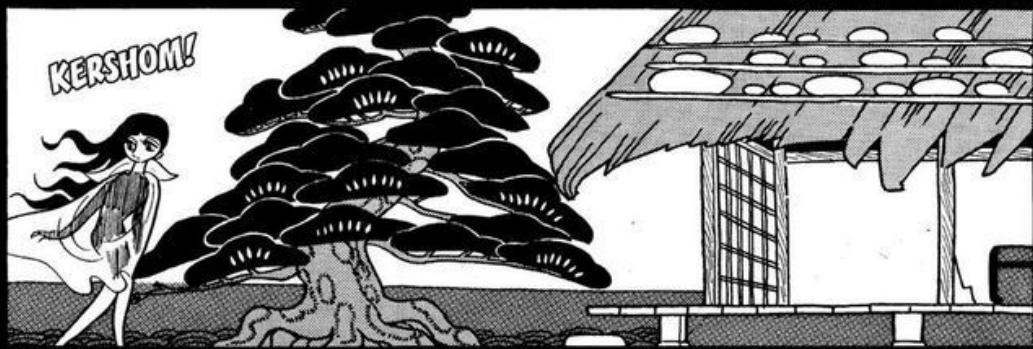
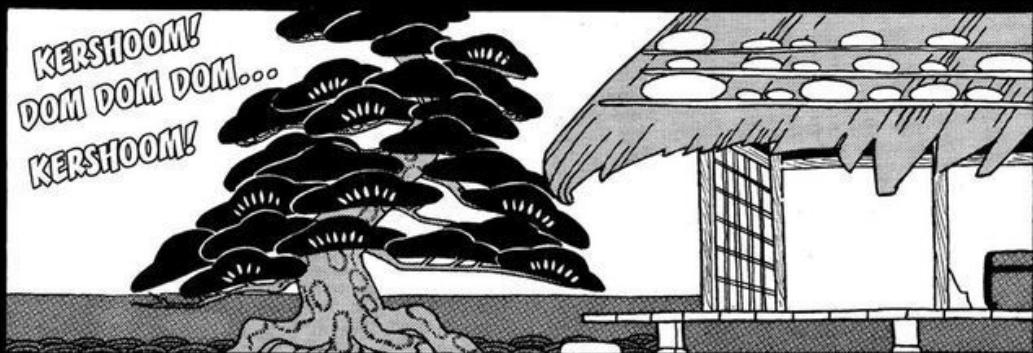


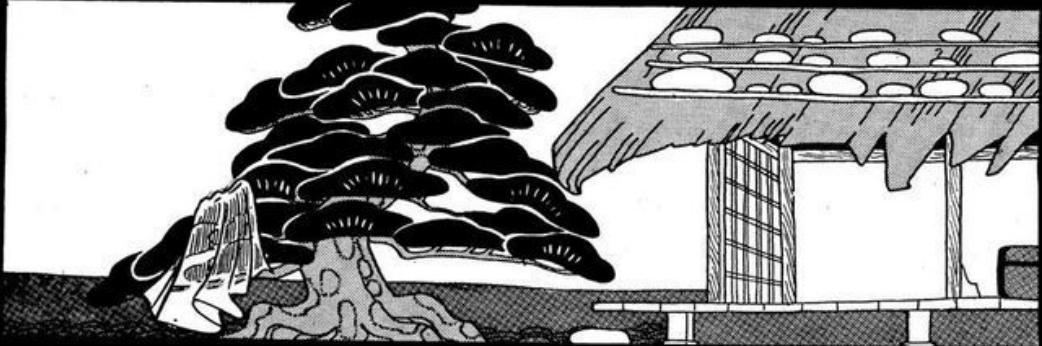
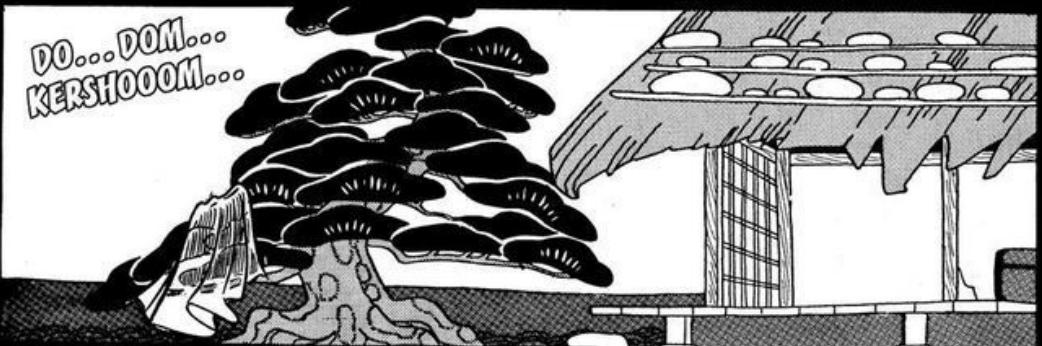
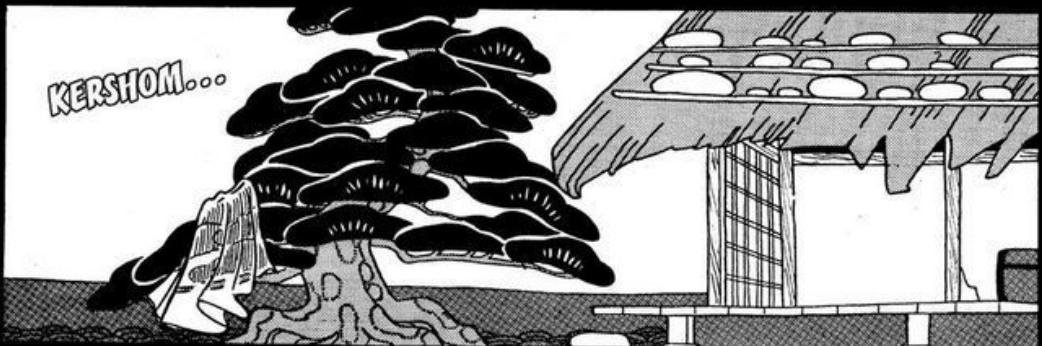
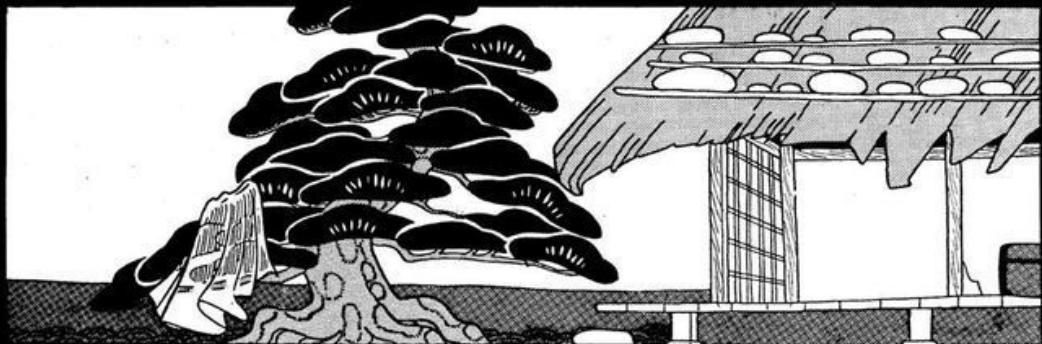
THE TALE ABOUT TO UNFOLD BEFORE YOU TAKES PLACE IN MIHO, ENSHU. THE SUN IS SETTING AND THERE IS NO ONE ABOUT. THE WIND CARRIES THE FRAGRANCE OF THE TIDES, ACROSS THE WHITE SANDS AND THROUGH THE PINES ALONG THE SHORE...

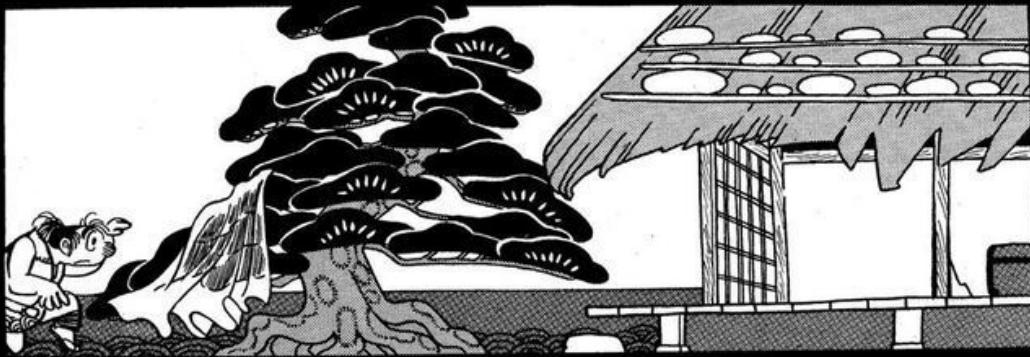
THE ONLY SOUND IS THAT OF THE WAVES, CEASELESSLY POUNDING ON THE SHORE...

DOM
DOM
KERSHOOOM!

DOM
DOMM
KESHOOOM...!





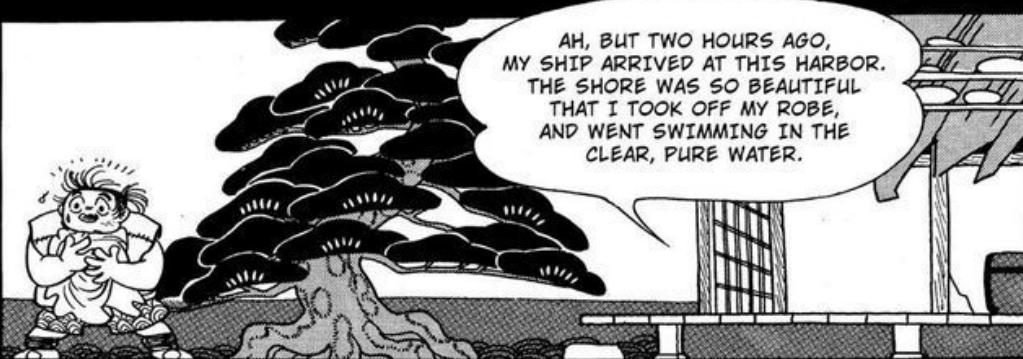




THAT ROBE IS
MINE. AND I
CAN'T RETURN
TO MY SHIP
WITHOUT IT...



YOU SAY ITS YOURS,
BUT IF IT IS, WHY DID YOU LEAVE
IT HERE? SHOW ME SOME PROOF,
OR AT LEAST SHOW
ME YOUR FACE SO I KNOW
WHO YOU ARE!



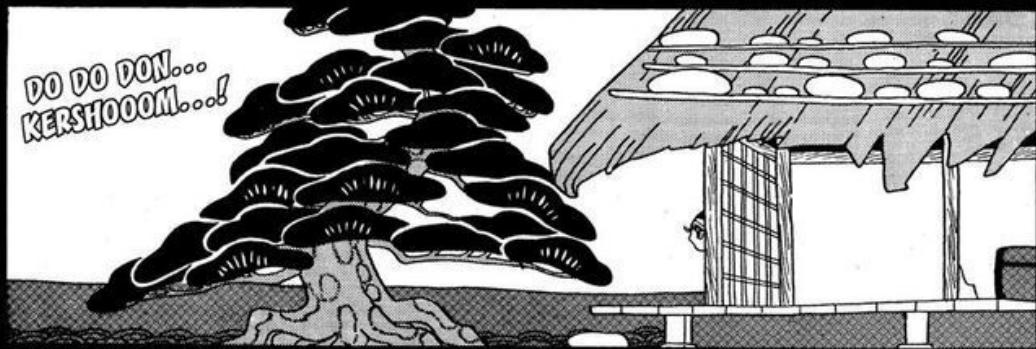
AH, BUT TWO HOURS AGO,
MY SHIP ARRIVED AT THIS HARBOR.
THE SHORE WAS SO BEAUTIFUL
THAT I TOOK OFF MY ROBE,
AND WENT SWIMMING IN THE
CLEAR, PURE WATER.



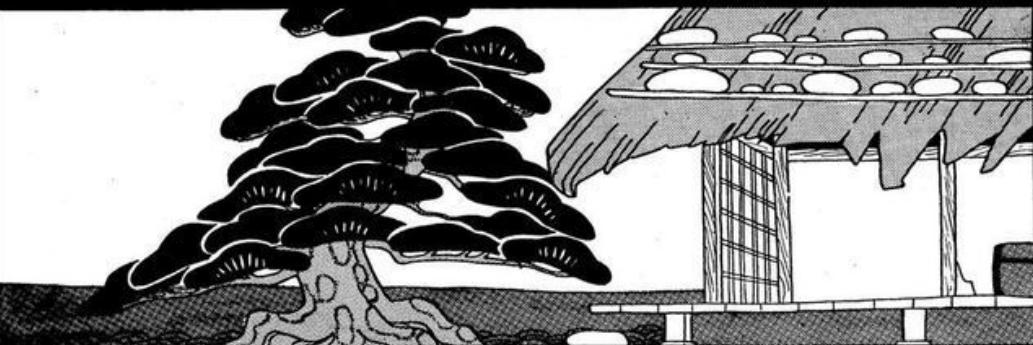
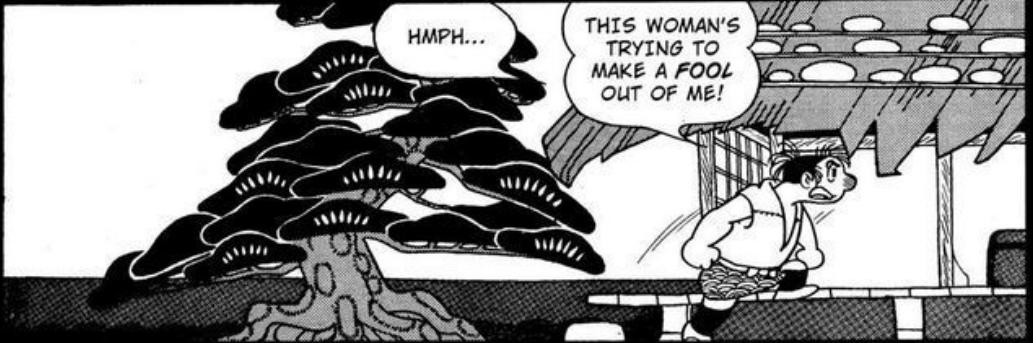
WELL, I DON'T CARE...
IT'S FINDER'S
KEEPERS, AS FAR
AS I'M CONCERNED...

PLEASE
SIR...YOU
CAN'T LEAVE
ME AS I AM...

I DON'T
DARE COME
OUT AND BE
SEEN LIKE
THIS...

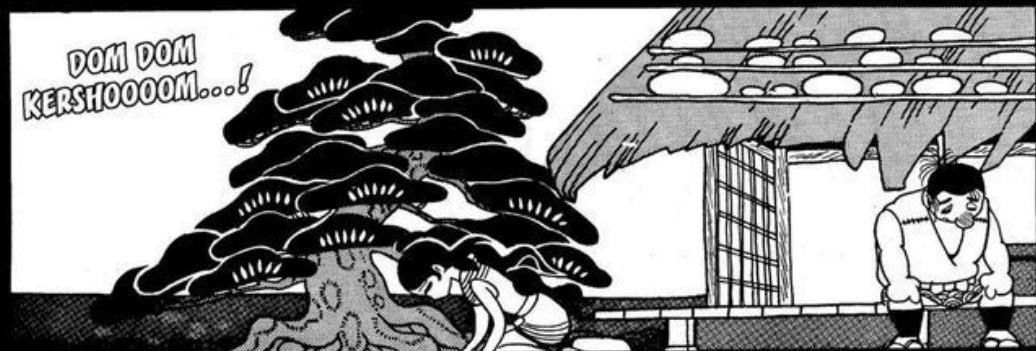
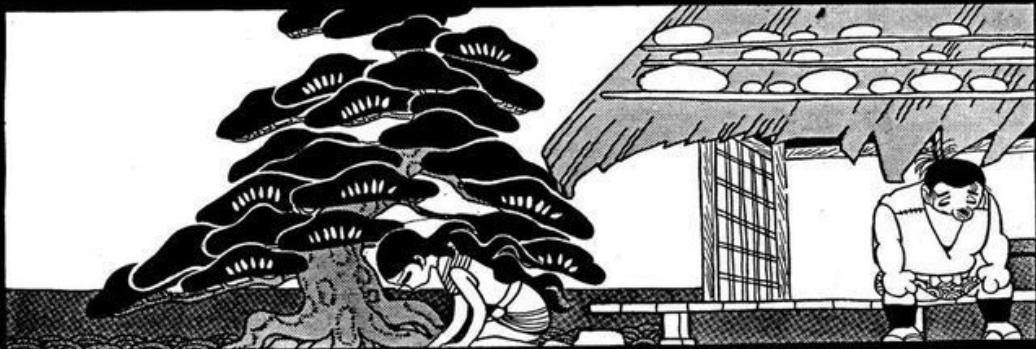


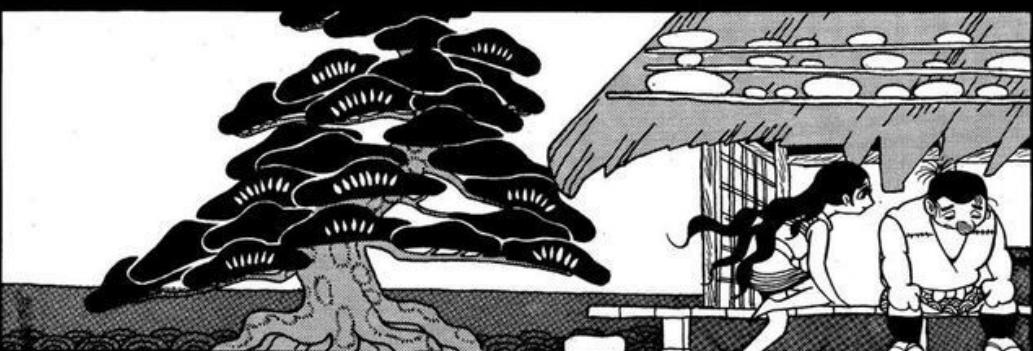


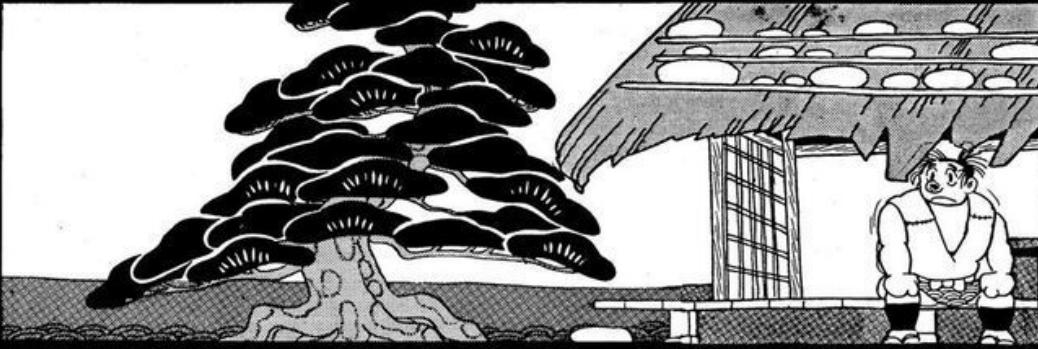
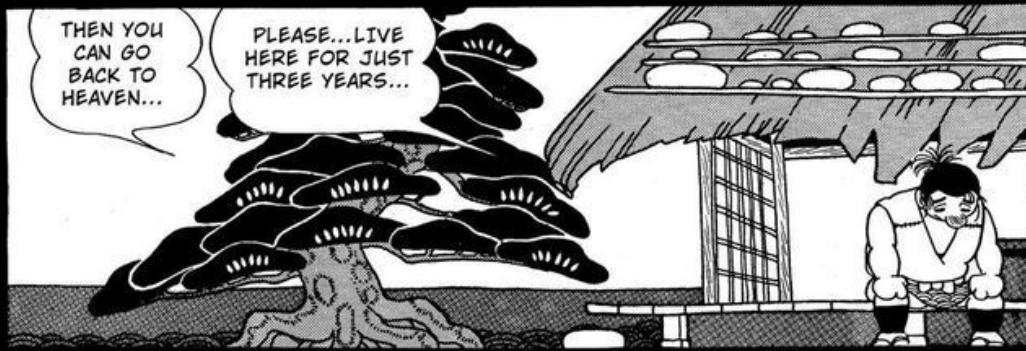














The figure shows a sequence of four images illustrating the effect of increasing noise on a scene. The first image is a clear black and white illustration of a traditional Japanese garden. As the noise level increases from the second image to the fourth, the details of the rocks, the water, and the building become progressively more obscured and less sharp.

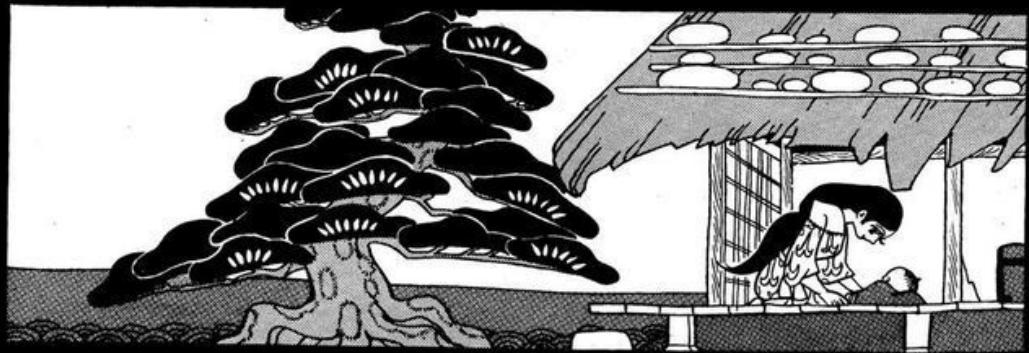
HERE YA GO!
I CAUGHT A FISH
FOR YA...FROM
THE SHORE WHERE
FISHING'S
FORBIDDEN!

QUICK! TAKE IT
INTO THE KITCHEN
BEFORE ANYONE
SPOTS US, OR
WE'LL BE IN BIG
TROUBLE!

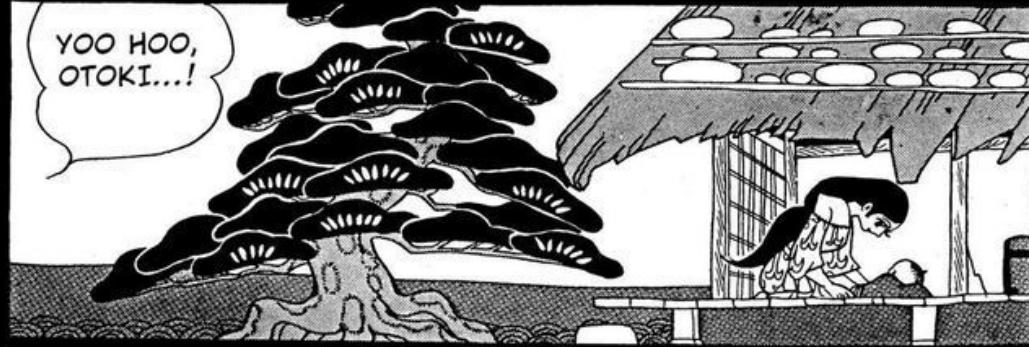
KERPLUNK...

I'M SO
SCARED
I COULD
FAINT!

DON DON DON...
KERSHOOOM...!



YOO HOO,
OTOKI....!



I'M HOME...
HOW'S THE
BABY?

I THOUGHT WE'D HAVE
SOME BOILED BARLEY
AND RICE FOR A CHANGE
TODAY, DEAR. I MADE
SOME SOUP FOR YOU,
TOO ...

KOOTCHEEE
KOOTCHEE
KOO

WHADD'A CUTE
LITTLE GIRL
YOU ARE....!

SO PRETTY
IT'S HARD TO
BELIEVE
YOU'RE MY
OWN BABY...

WHEN YOU GROW UP YOU'LL BE
THE MOST BEAUTIFUL WOMAN
ON THE COAST! I'LL FIND YOU A
GOOD MAN TO MARRY...

NO! WE CAN'T
ALLOW HER
TO MARRY!

WELL, YOU'RE AN ANGEL, AND
YOUR BABY'S AS PRETTY AS
AN ANGEL, SO WHAT'S
WRONG WITH HER GETTING
MARRIED SOMEDAY?

OH, YEAH...
YOU DID SAY
YOU'D HAVE
TO LEAVE
SOMEDAY...

...BUT YOU
DON'T HAVE TO
TAKE HER
WITH YOU,
DO YOU?

I KNOW IT'S BEEN THREE YEARS, BUT THE WORLD'S CHANGED, AND THERE'S A DIFFERENT LORD OF THE LAND NOW..

TAIRA YOSHIMOCHI USED TO BE THE LORD...

BUT NOW IT'S TAIRA MASAKADO...

AND HE'S A GOOD MAN...

OUR LIVES'VE REALLY GOTTEN BETTER...

SO WHAT I'M SAYING IS... YOU DON'T HAVE TO LEAVE... WHY NOT JUST LIVE HERE WITH ME FOREVER?

HA!...THERE YOU GO AGAIN...WON'T YOU EVER GIVE UP?

A PROMISE IS A PROMISE, RIGHT?

YOU'RE TO GIVE ME BACK MY ROBE, AND THEN I'LL GO...THAT WAS THE ARRANGEMENT...

B..BUT I'VE WORKED LIKE A DOG FOR THE LAST THREE YEARS, ALL FOR YOU...

I EARNED AS MUCH MONEY AS I COULD...

YES, THAT'S TRUE...YOU'VE BEEN A VERY GOOD HUSBAND...

TO BE HONEST...

I WISH WE DIDN'T HAVE TO PART...

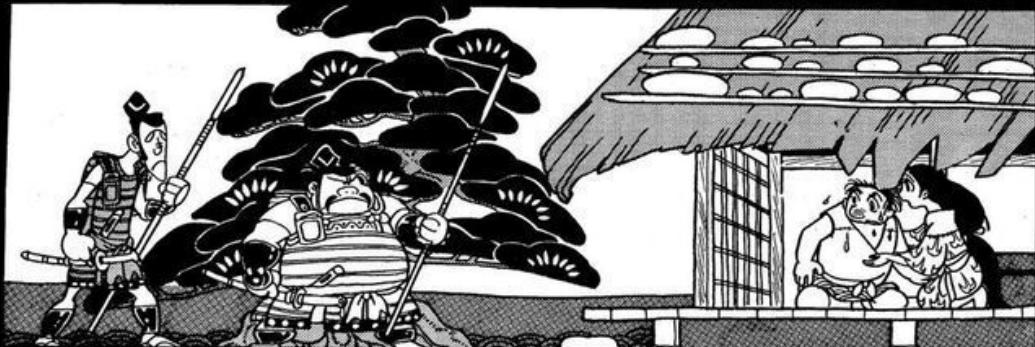
LISTEN, OTOKI...

I KNOW YOU SAID THAT THERE WERE WARS ALL OVER WHERE YOU COME FROM...

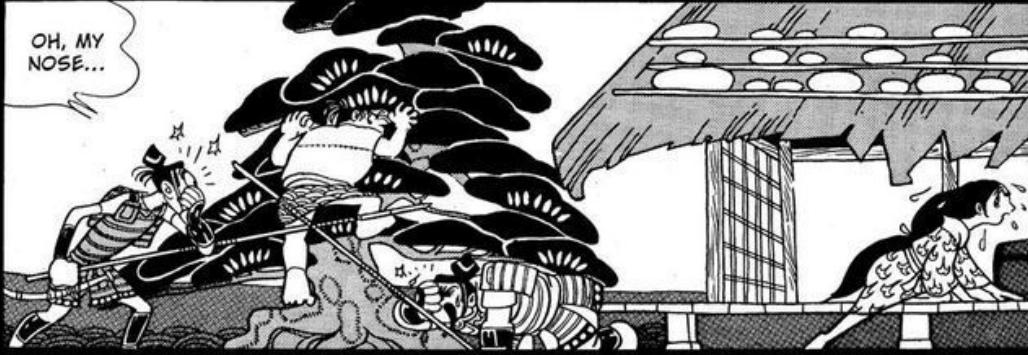
...AN' THAT THEY'VE GOT WEAPONS THAT CAN KILL MILLIONS OF PEOPLE ALL AT ONCE...

...AN' THAT THEY'VE POISONED THE SEAS AND THAT THE FIELDS AND MOUNTAINS ARE ALL PARCHED AND DRIED UP...

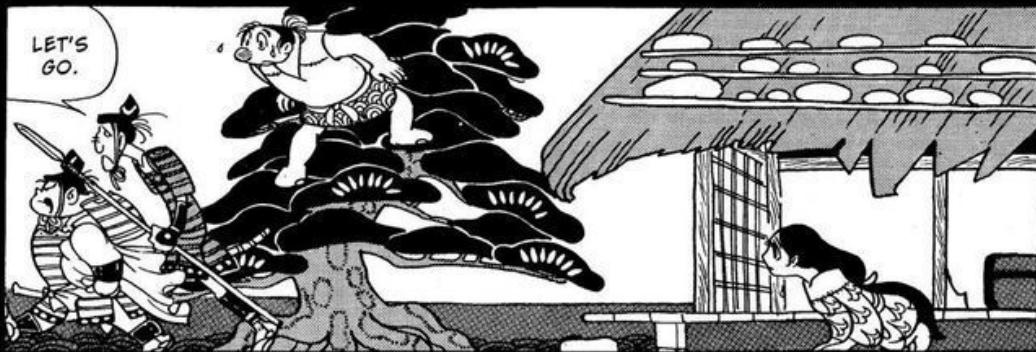












B..BUT DIDN'T YOU SAY
A LONG TIME AGO THAT
IF ANYONE ELSE EVER
GOT HOLD OF THAT
ROBE, YOU'D DIE?!

I...I DID... IT'S A ROBE
THAT NO ONE IN THIS WORLD
COULD EVER MAKE...BUT IN
MY WORLD IT'S A VERY
COMMON ITEM...



ZUKU, REMEMBER THAT I TOLD
YOU I CAME FROM A LAND FAR,
FAR AWAY...WELL, TO TELL YOU
THE TRUTH, I CAME FROM A PLACE
1,500 YEARS IN THE FUTURE...



BRINGING ANYTHING
FROM THE FUTURE INTO
THE PAST IS A TERRIBLE
CRIME, BECAUSE IT CAN
CHANGE THE COURSE
OF HISTORY...

HOW SHOULD I
KNOW ABOUT
THAT? STUFF LIKE
THAT MAKES MY
HEAD HURT!

AT ANY RATE, I'M
GONNA GO GET IT
BACK FOR YOU!

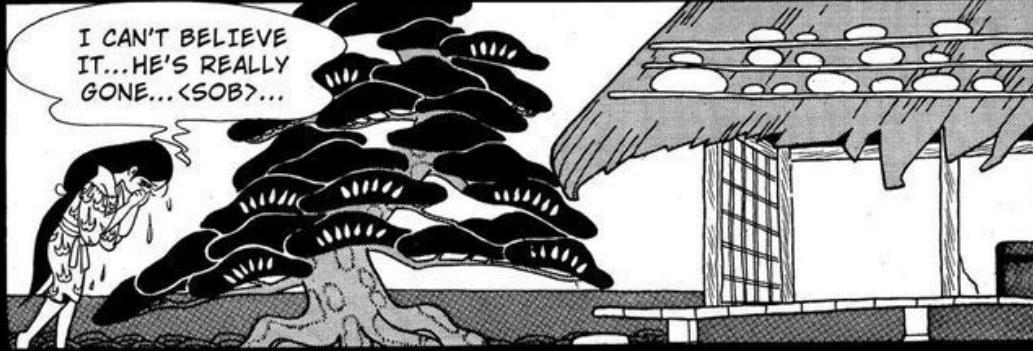
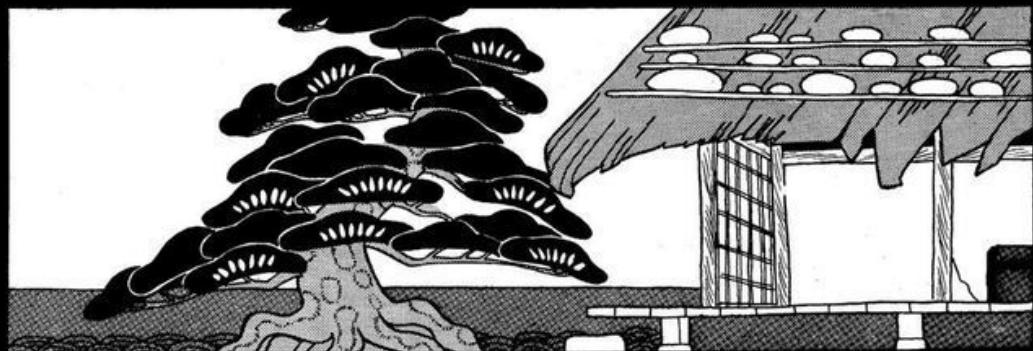
NO,
ZUKU!
NO!

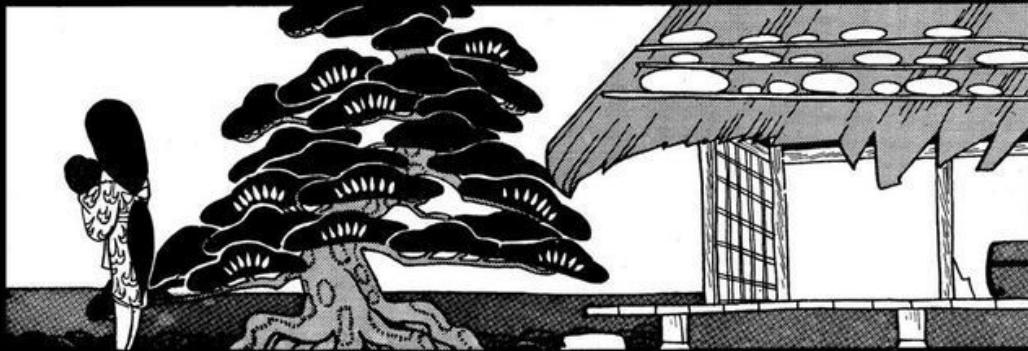
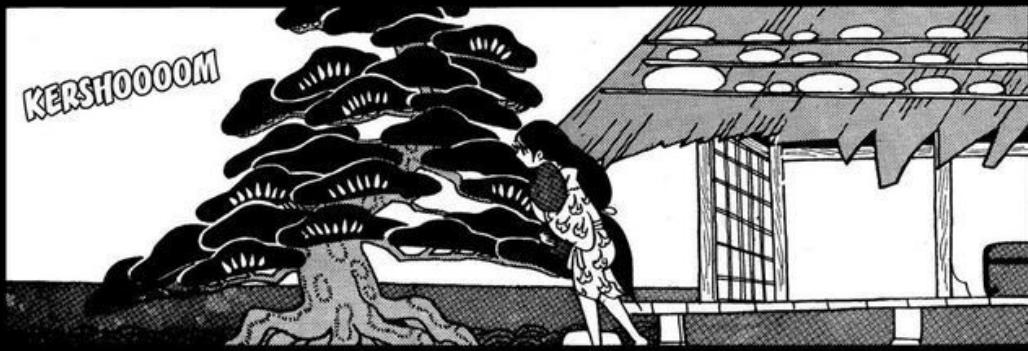
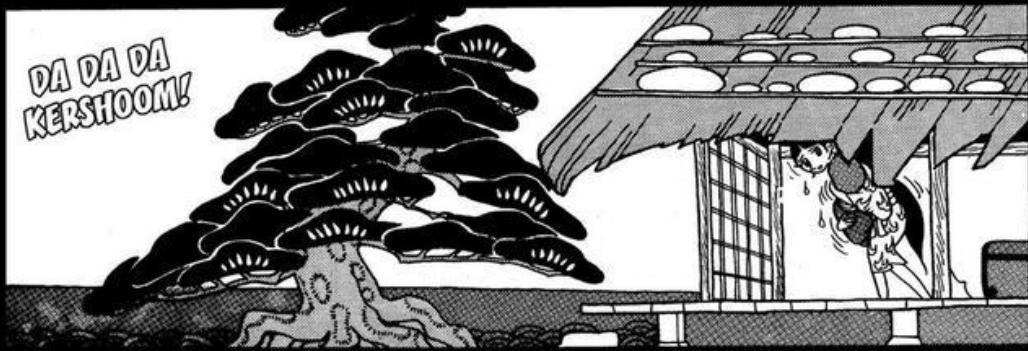
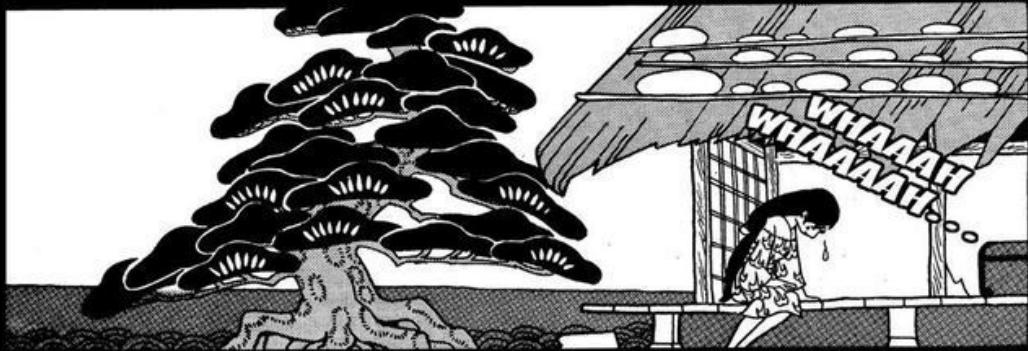


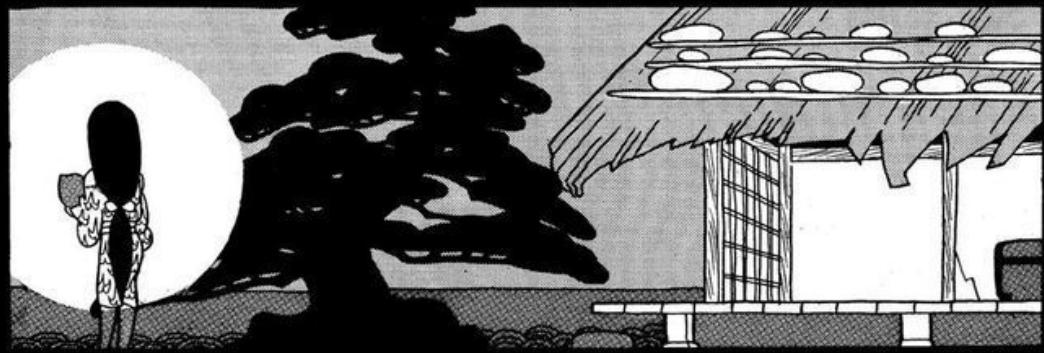
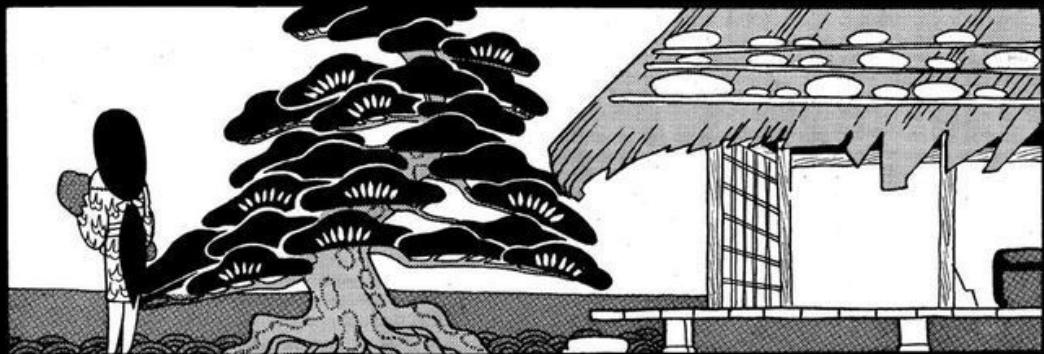
PLEASE!
PLEASE DON'T
GO! IT'S
DANGEROUS!

TH...THEY'LL
FORCE YOU
TO SERVE IN
THEIR ARMY!









DA DA DOM
DA DA DOM...
KERSHOOM

C C C
H H H
I I I
R R R
P P P



MY
POOR
BABY...

LISTEN...YOUR
MOTHER...USED
TO LIVE IN A
PLACE FAR, FAR
IN THE FUTURE...

...THERE WERE
TERRIBLE WARS IN
THAT PLACE, AND
MILLIONS KILLED...

WHEN MY PARENTS
WERE KILLED, I
BECAME AN ORPHAN
AND WAS PUT INTO A
DETENTION CAMP...

OH, HOW I HATED
THAT TIME... AND THE
PEOPLE OF THAT
TIME... I SO WISHED
THAT I COULD LIVE
IN ANOTHER ERA...

AND IT WAS
THEN THAT
I SAW A
STRANGE
BIRD...

IT MIGHT EVEN
HAVE BEEN A
DREAM... I'M
REALLY NOT
SURE...

...BUT THE BIRD'S BODY
SEEMED TO BE ON FIRE. IT
TOLD ME IT COULD GRANT MY
WISH AND SEND ME TO A
PLACE IN THE PAST...

AND I COULD
STAY AS LONG
AS I WANTED...

I WAS SO
HAPPY, I
COULDN'T
BELIEVE
IT...

BUT IN RETURN,
I HAD TO PROMISE
THAT I WOULDN'T
CHANGE THE COURSE
OF HISTORY IN
ANY WAY...

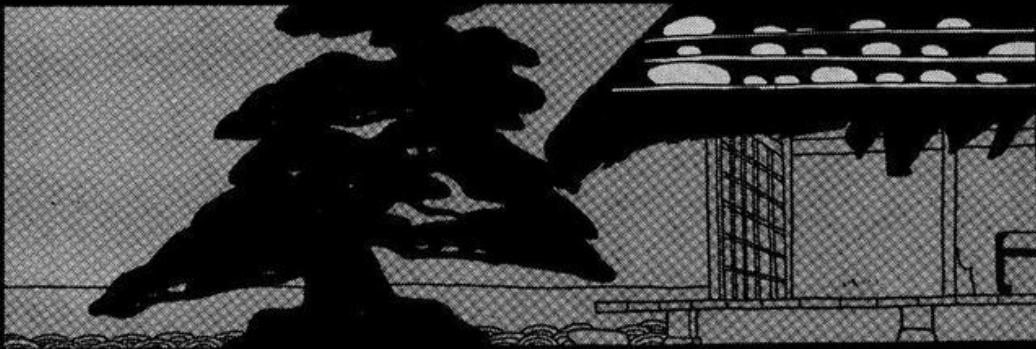
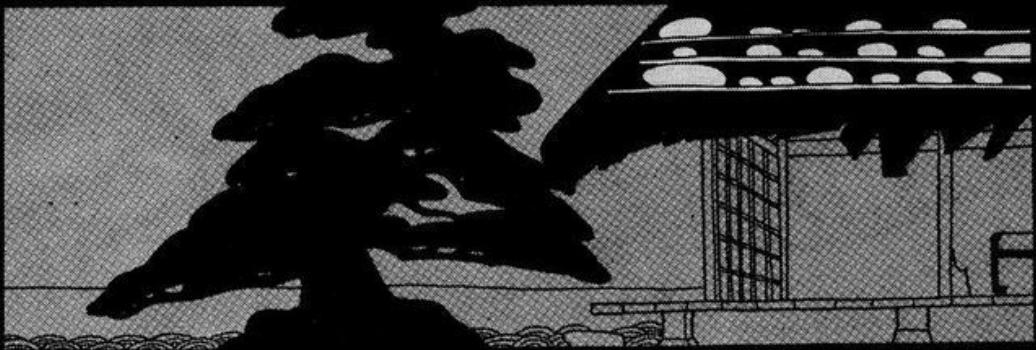
SO THE PROBLEM IS,
LITTLE BABY, THAT IF
MY ROBE FALLS INTO
THE HANDS OF
SOMEONE IN THIS
WORLD, IT COULD
CHANGE THE WHOLE
HISTORY OF FABRIC...

AND I'VE GIVEN
BIRTH TO YOU,
TOO... SO IF
YOU GROW UP...

YOU'LL BE A
DESCENDANT OF A
PERSON FROM THE
FUTURE...











I'M
HOME,
OTOKI...



WHERE HAVE
YOU GONE...?



OTOKI... I LOVE YOU
SO... B.. BUT I DON'T
THINK I CAN FOLLOW
YOU AND RETURN
THIS TO YOU...

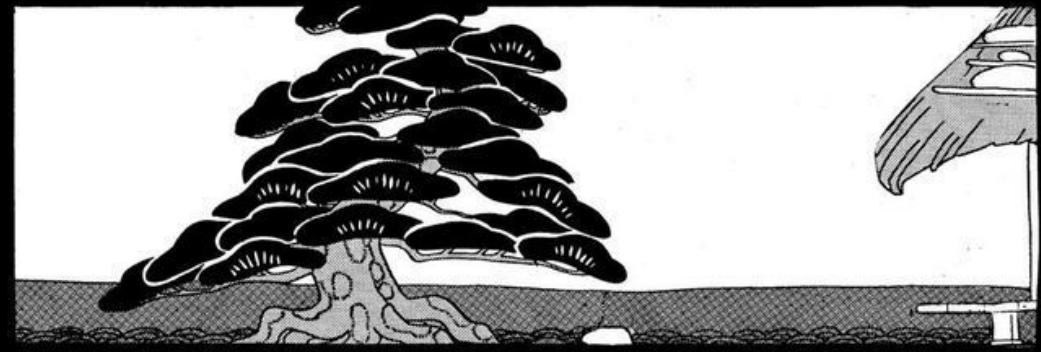
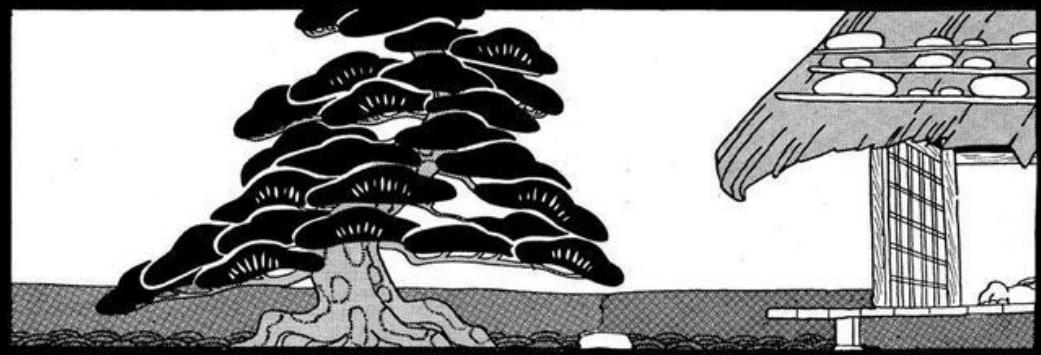
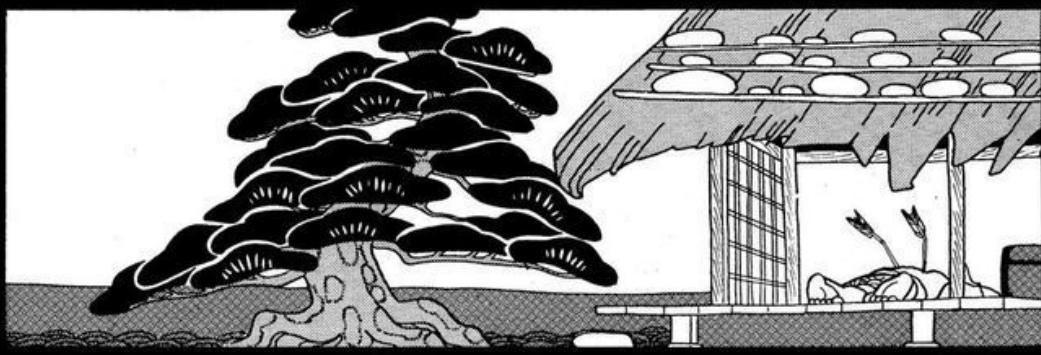
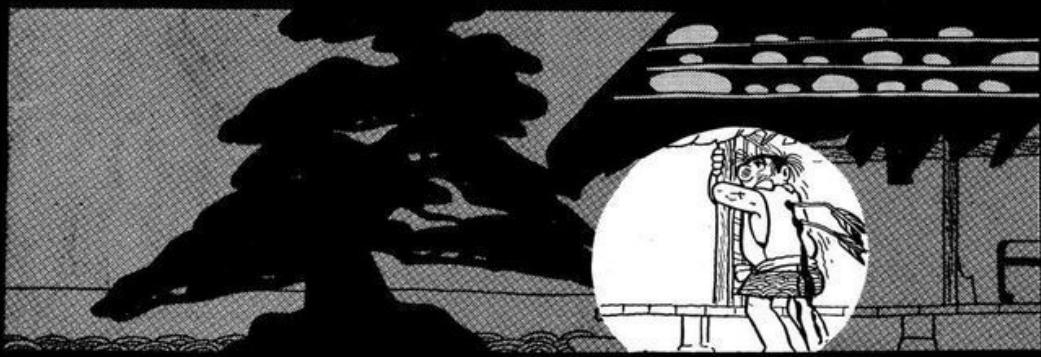


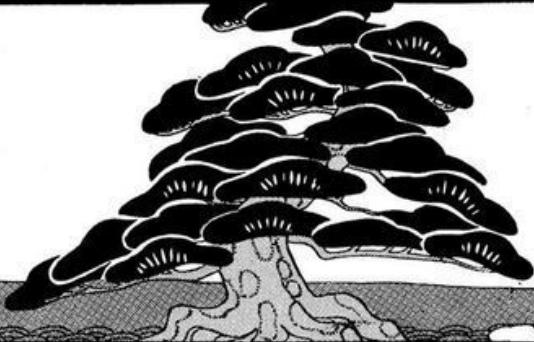
DON'T WORRY, THOUGH...
I'LL MAKE SURE THAT NO
ONE GETS THE ROBE...
I'LL BURY IT HERE AMONG
THE ROOTS OF THIS
PINE TREE...



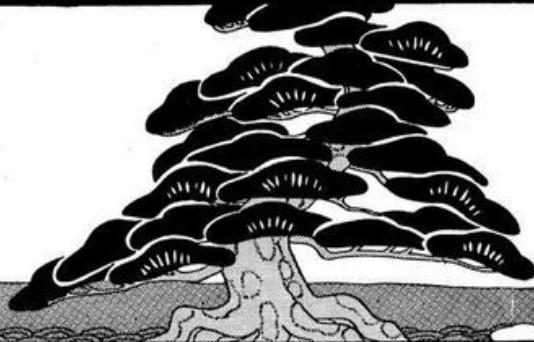
IT'LL BE SAFE HERE
FOR HUNDREDS,
MAYBE THOUSANDS OF
YEARS... YOU CAN
COME BACK FOR IT,
ANYTIME, OKAY...?







YEARS PASS ON THE
SHORE OF MIHO, AND
THE ONLY SOUND IS
THAT OF THE WIND
THROUGH THE PINES
AND THE WAVES ON
THE BEACH...



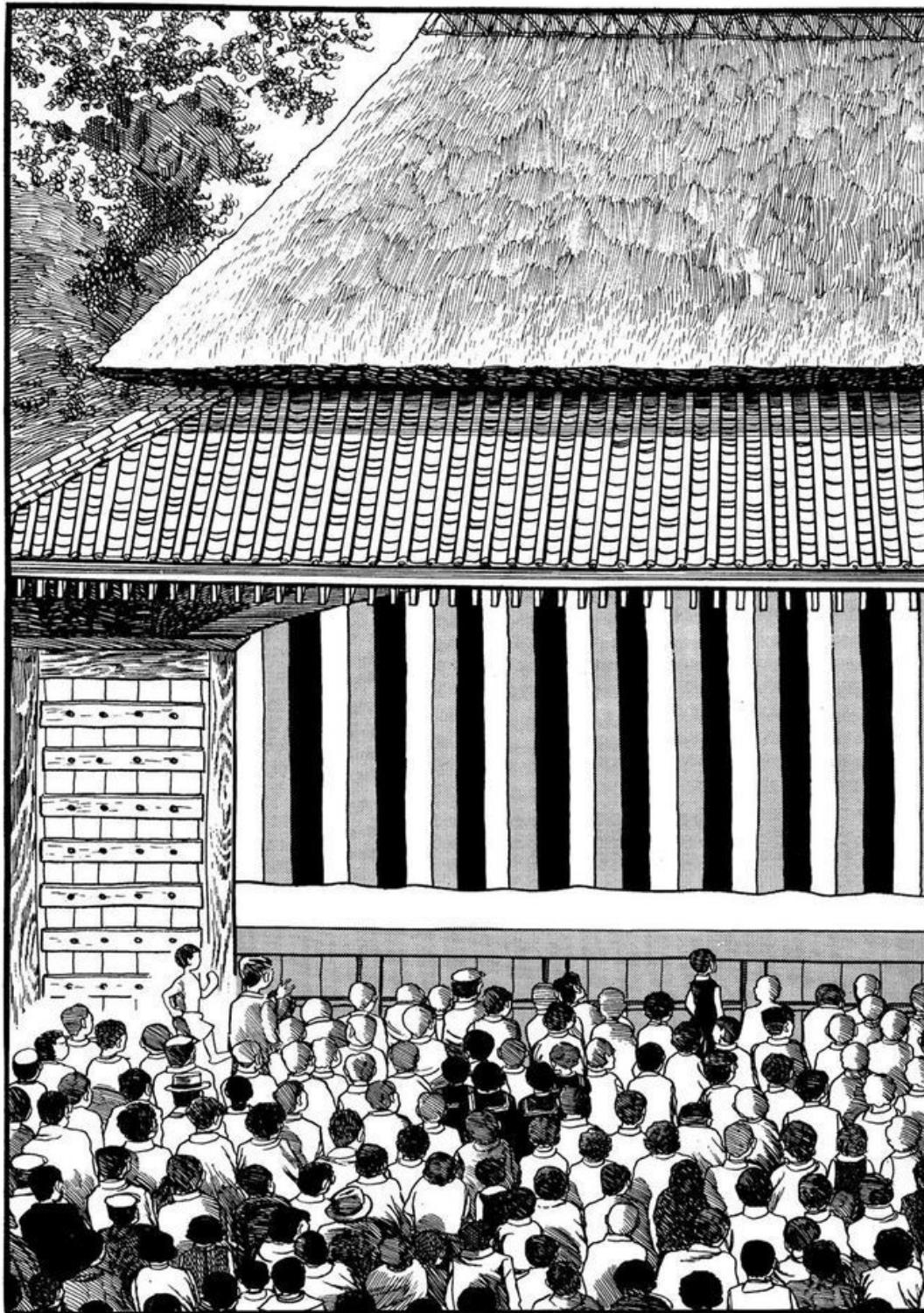
ZUKU AND HIS SIMPLE
HOUSE HAVE BOTH LONG
DISAPPEARED. THE ONLY
THING THAT SURVIVES
IS THE TALE OF THE
WONDERFUL AND
MYSTERIOUS ROBE
OF FEATHERS...



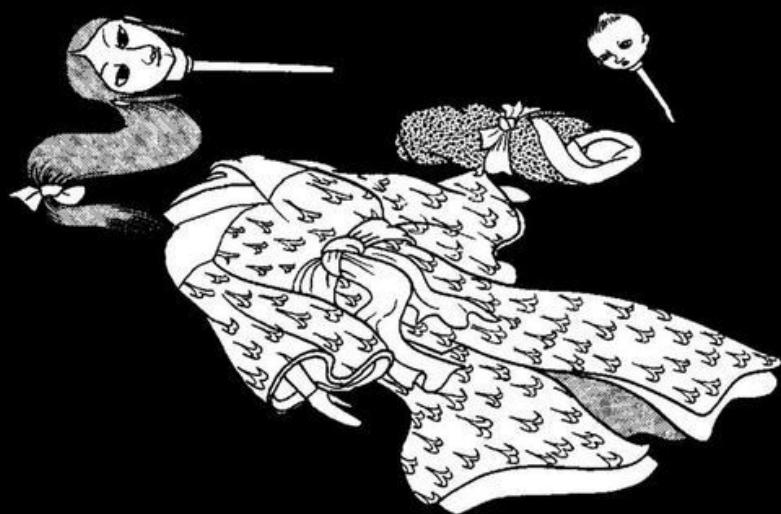
...THE TALE I
HAVE JUST
TOLD...



CLAP CLAP CLAP CLAP CLAP







ABOUT THIS EDITION OF PHOENIX: **CIVIL WAR: PART 2**

The 12 self-contained yet interlinked stories that compose *Phoenix* (*Hi no tori* in Japanese, literally "Firebird") is considered by many to be the summit of Osamu Tezuka's artistic achievement. Tezuka himself referred to *Phoenix* as his "life work." Painstakingly composed over a span of decades (initial versions appeared as early as 1954), serialized in a number of venues, and left incomplete with Tezuka's death in 1989, *Phoenix* represents Tezuka's ambitious attempt to push all he knew about the comics medium to address fundamental questions about existence.

All 12 stories in *Phoenix* are linked by the presence of the mythical bird, an immortal guardian of the universal life force. Read in order, the separate stories jump across time, alternating between a distant future and a distant past, converging on the present, with characters from one story being reincarnated in another. The existing twelve stories, totaling over three thousand pages of work, are subtitled "Dawn," "Future," "Yamato," "Space," "Karma," "Resurrection," "Robe of Feathers," "Nostalgia," "Civil War," "Life," "Strange Beings," and "Sun."

This edition, *Phoenix: Civil War, Part 2*, is an English translation of the second half of the eighth of the 12 *Phoenix* stories. "Civil War: Part 2" was first serialized from 1978 to 1980 in *Manga Shonen Magazine*. The only other portion of *Phoenix* to appear in English previously is a 27-page excerpt from Dadakai's translation of "Karma," which was printed in Frederik L. Schodt's *Manga! Manga! The World of Japanese Comics*.

A few words from Osamu Tezuka about the volumes "Civil War" and "Robe of Feathers"

When "Civil War" was first serialized in *Manga Shonen Magazine*, I was dissatisfied with the last scene, and for a variety of reasons felt it to be very imperfect. In this new compilation I have therefore taken the opportunity to revise the final scene, to make it better fit the story that I had originally intended.

"Robe of Feathers" originally appeared in the manga magazine, *Com*, as a very short piece, but due to complaints about discrimination, among other things, it was never reprinted in its entirety. It appeared once in *Manga Shonen*, but in that version I completely changed the dialog. So in this volume I am releasing a third version of the story.

In reality, "Robe of Feathers" was first designed to run between the "Resurrection" and "Nostalgia" volumes of the *Phoenix* story. Readers will note that it actually takes place seventy or eighty years before "Civil War."

Osamu Tezuka
September 1980

ABOUT THIS TRANSLATION

An Interview with "Dadakai"

—Jared Cook and Frederik Schodt

The story of the translation of *Phoenix: A Tale of the Future* is an epic tale in and of itself. It is 25 years old. When VIZ Comics licensed the English translation rights from Tezuka Productions, we were told that translations of the first five volumes of *Phoenix* had already been done. Commissioned a quarter of a century ago but never published, the translations existed only as dim photocopies of the original Japanese publication, with word balloons whited out and written over in English. When we received the manuscript in the mail, the dust had not yet been completely shaken off. The credit: a mysterious outfit known as "Dadakai."

Since then two former members of Dadakai, who both now live in California, have stepped forward to identify themselves. Jared Cook is a television producer, primarily of Japanese commercials, running his own film coordination company, the Chiari Cook Co., since 1985. Frederik Schodt is an interpreter and author of several books, including the groundbreaking tomes *Manga! Manga! The World of Japanese Comics* and *Dreamland Japan: Writings on Modern Manga*. Schodt has translated Tezuka's manga adaptation of *Crime and Punishment* and is working on a book of history, as well as translating the English publication of Tezuka's *Astro Boy* manga for Dark Horse Comics. This interview was conducted by Carl Gustav Horn and Alvin Lu.

Frederik Schodt: I was thinking the other day about what Tezuka would have thought about Metropolis, because I went to see Tron with Tezuka.

Q: What was that like?

FS: He wasn't so impressed. He was a very competitive man, and he wasn't very impressed with the future of computer graphics. I think that when he saw *Tron* he thought it was too cold and too sterile, that computer graphics would never be able to achieve the warmth of hand-drawn animation. But he was always interested in what was going on and in what other animators were doing. We also went to see Ralph Bakshi's *Lord of the Rings*, for example.

Q: Can you go into the history of your *Phoenix* translation? Why didn't the translation get published at the time?

Jared Cook: We translated *Phoenix* around 1976-77 as part of Dadakai, which was a loose association of four friends designed to promote manga overseas. We were a little ahead of our time. We knocked on a lot of doors, but the seventies just were not the right time to introduce manga to English speakers. I remember meeting with a rep from Marvel Comics who happened to be in Tokyo. His reaction to our idea of translating Japanese manga into English was not at all inspiring.

I don't think there was much awareness of Japanese culture in America. I visited several animation clubs and groups with Osamu Tezuka in the eighties and became aware of the few but intense followers of Japanese animation, but the phenomenon of Americans starting to collect and appreciate Japanese manga and animation didn't gather steam until the nineties, I think.

I still have relatives that ask me to speak some "Chinese." Americans, in general, don't seem to have a good grasp of geography, except maybe for the areas that we happen to be bombing at the present.

FS: We realized after doing all this work that it was basically too early. People had no idea what Japanese comics were. The attitude was still, "Japanese comics? Are you kidding?" When I wrote my first book, *Manga! Manga!*, I actually had a dispute with my editor about the title, because I was afraid it would be stuck in library card catalogs with "manganese." At the time there would have been no association with comics at all.

Q: The form of the translation is...unique. It's very carefully handmade.

JC: We were working in an age when copiers were just making their appearance. No computers. The only way we could translate the work and have it live together with the pictures was to white out the dialogue balloons and handwrite the English translation into the boxes. This required some serious editing to make the words fit into their respective "containers," but it also forced us to constantly refer to the pictures and make sure the language was reflecting the drama on the page. It was definitely a hands-on process, requiring the disassembly and reassembly of the books. We regretted that we were unable to flip the pages, so that we could make the English volumes follow the English-style, left-to-right reading direction rather than the right-to-left, Japanese style.

FS: It was all done by hand. With lots of Liquid Paper. This was as close as we could get at the time to a readable prototype, and it was expensive to make copies. You can tell it's not a real high-quality copy, but we went to a great deal of trouble. I'm embarrassed to say this, but we actually took what we thought was the strongest of the first photocopied five volumes to a printer. We did this because we wanted to conduct a survey of readers, to see what they thought of the story and of manga in general, and we needed multiple copies to do so. But what we took to the printer was one of our rather poor quality originals [points to manuscript], so we wound up with a second-generation bad copy. At that time, it wasn't cheap to take a book of over two hundred pages to a printer, but it was still cheaper than trying to use a copy machine.

Q: Do you draw comics yourself?

FS: I do some cartooning, but I don't claim to be a comic artist. Still, in my book *Manga! Manga!*, where I have an excerpt from one volume of *Phoenix*, I really tried to do a semi-professional retouch and lettering job. I was crushed because one reviewer at the time said he liked the selections, but thought the lettering wasn't very professional! It was true, of course, but I had just spent ages and ages trying to get it right. There used to be this clear plastic lettering guide which people used with a blue pencil to draw reference lines in the balloons before lettering. It had little holes in it, and by rotating part of it, you could basically adjust the height of the letters, the middle line of the letter, the line spacing, and so forth. All comics artists, or at least all the letterers, used it. You would take a ruler, put it on the page, then put this plastic thingamajig on top of it, and with the blue pencil you would draw three or more guide lines which wouldn't show up when the pages were printed. I spent a lot of time on that. Now nobody letters by hand, right? It's all computers, I suppose.

Q: What was "Dadakai"?

JC: Fred came up with the name, a play on the Dada art movement and the Japanese word for fret / nonsense. Shinji Sakamoto was our "business manager," who established contacts and negotiated contracts, and he was also our "quality control" person, who helped check our translations. There was a Japanese woman named Midori Ueda who was also an initial member who helped with translation, but I recall that only Fred, Sakamoto, and myself stayed with the *Phoenix* project until completion.

We had absolutely no experience or credits to

bring to Tezuka. Tezuka and Matsutani were kind enough and indulgent enough to take a chance on some crazy college students. I think they realized that we were sincere, however. And I think we understood that *Phoenix* was a work that really should be introduced to English readers.

FS: Jared is the one who first broached the idea of forming Dadakai to me, but after a quarter of a century, our memories actually start to blur. According to Sakamoto, he is the one who first came up with the idea. I know it wasn't me, as I'm not that entrepreneurial. I was interested in the Dadaism at the time, and I believe that I came up with the "DADA" part of the name, but Sakamoto probably supplied the "KAI" ("association") and the ideograms for DADA. It was always an informal organization, with Jared and me doing the actual translations. Dadakai effectively ceased to function after 1978, although Jared and I continued actively working with manga and animation with Tezuka Productions until Tezuka's death, and maintain a strong relationship with the company today.

Q: What other works did you guys translate?

FS: *Phoenix* was the first work we did. We did the *Battlefield* series by Leiji Matsumoto after that. I've never asked Matsumoto what he thought of us. Shinji Sakamoto was really into motorcycles, and he knew Matsumoto was really into motorcycles. In fact Matsumoto was the pioneer of mecha; he almost invented the whole concept of mecha in manga. He was really into guns and motorcycles and machines—with an aura of romance. That was what the whole mecha concept was about. So we went to Matsumoto's place on motorcycles. I had a Honda 750, and I wore a huge sheepskin-lined leather jacket. Sakamoto was into antique motorcycles, and I don't know what motorcycle he went in on, but he was wearing knee-high boots. I can't remember whose bike Jared was on. We roared over to Matsumoto's place and must have looked very strange.

When I was later working at a translating and interpreting firm in Japan, they knew I had this side thing with manga. Somehow they were approached by a production company in Tokyo. There was a movie being made of Riyoko Ikeda's *The Rose of Versailles*, a live-action film, and they needed the whole manga series to be translated—in a hurry. The film was to be called *Lady Oscar*. It was one of the most convoluted co-productions in the world. Maybe worse than that. It was based on a Japanese manga about the French Revolution, but the manga had androgynous gender-bending Japanese *shojo* manga characters. Since the producers were going

to make a live-action film based on this, they needed the whole manga series—which is thousands of pages long—translated and sent to the screenwriters in LA, who would then turn it into an English screenplay, which would then be used by the French director, Jacques Demy, who would use English actors acting on location in Paris and in Versailles. It was kind of a Moebius-strip-Klein-bottle-mirror-image thing. A real happy cultural goulash. And ultimately the film would be shown in Japan for the Japanese market. The actors themselves were British, they all spoke in English, and they were later dubbed into Japanese. No one was speaking French to my knowledge. It actually showed in San Francisco at the Castro once. I know because my postman was raving about it.

Most of the stuff I was doing at this company consisted of incredibly boring business and government reports. Since they knew I was into manga they said, "Hey, you're the man, here you go," so Jared and I sat down and in maybe ten days we did the whole thing—the whole Rose of Versailles series. This was done independent of Dadakai, and it was quite an extraordinary feat. We wrote in pencil right on copies of the pages of the graphic novel. We may have whited out the balloons, or because of the time factor we may have just written in between the lines of the Japanese. I can't remember. Anyway, that was sent to Hollywood and then to England. The readers must have just been flabbergasted. I never heard anything about our translation again. What was really tragic is that I never made a copy. We submitted the only copy. It'd be a true historical artifact today. If anybody finds it, I'd like to have it.

What's really funny is that many years later I was approached by a company in Tokyo and asked to translate The Rose of Versailles. Two volumes of the series were published in English in Japan, but I had to do that translation from scratch.

Oh, and I should mention that in 1978 Jared and I also translated the second volume of Keiji Nakazawa's Barefoot Gen series, about the bombing of Hiroshima.

Q: Which of Dr. Tezuka's works are your favorites? What are some of your favorite manga overall?

JC: The first few volumes of Phoenix are absolutely the best. I think these are the core of Tezuka's "life work"...The brilliant way Tezuka jumps through time, while still binding the stories together through reincarnated characters, was at its best in the first six volumes. They introduced a cinematic perspective to Japanese manga that was revolutionary. The manipulation of time and character are still absolute works of genius. Some of the visionary aspects are still remarkable for their accuracy. The architecture of the Tokyo Prefecture office building in

Shinjuku existed in a volume of Phoenix long before the building was actually built. Maybe the architect was a reader of Tezuka, but I think Dr. Tezuka was also inspired in the way he could envision the future.

My favorite manga when I was rummaging through used bookstores in Tokyo were Ashita no Joe, Otoko Oidon, Notari Matsutaro, and the sentimental series Yuki no Sanchome. Leiji Matsumoto's Battlefield series was also a favorite of mine. I was also a big fan of Hagure Gumo, and even made silkscreen T-shirts with the character from Gaki Deka. I'm not sure if any of these would translate well into English. They all have very distinct Japanese cultural themes that would be difficult to render into English. It's almost like trying to translate the information we get from body language.

FS: I was going to university in Japan from 1970 to 1972. It was a very political time and lots of university students were reading manga. It was a kind of generational badge: "We read manga." Manga were also getting much more interesting. Gekiga were appearing; some of them were very political and a lot of the artists were experimenting heavily. A lot of the most interesting stuff around today still comes from that period. Many of my Japanese friends were reading manga, so they started telling me what they thought was great. I had this one friend, Shuichi Okada—he's a Japan Airlines pilot now, flies jumbos and whatnot. I remember he came to me and said, "There's this really cool manga. You gotta read it! It's called the Phoenix!" I said, "Phoenix? Yeah, right! Will you loan me some copies?" He presented it almost like this religious thing. You know, like a holy work. And when I read it I just thought it was amazing. I never had read anything in manga that grabbed me like that. So Okada has a lot of responsibility for what he did to my life.

It was a special era. The Vietnam War was still going on, the hippie era was still around and hadn't imploded completely, so something with a cosmic theme like Phoenix was pretty powerful stuff for someone 20, 21 years old. I was probably reading Herman Hesse, Kurt Vonnegut, Jack Kerouac, the usual stuff the hippie generation read, and then I read Phoenix...

Q: How did you go about approaching the artists for permission to translate their work?

JC: My memory of linking up with Tezuka pro was just one phone call and a quickly arranged meeting with Mr. Matsutani, Tezuka's manager, and that started the ball rolling. I recently heard from our old partner, Sakamoto, and he recalls having spent a significant amount of time contacting Tezuka Pro and reassuring Mr. Matsutani and Tezuka, himself, that we were competent translators and

his work would be in good hands. So I guess it was not as easy a start as I assume. Tezuka was actually just getting back on his feet after the dissolution of Mushi Pro, his first company. I think Matsutani, who was also fairly new to the new Tezuka Productions, was eager to start a new project and begin the "resurrection" of Tezuka's manga/animation enterprise. Once we cleared the "confidence" hurdle, the work progressed very smoothly and we have always had a very warm relationship with the folks at Tezuka Pro. We also spoke to Leiji Matsumoto and Go Nagai, but Tezuka was our best and most foremost contact in the manga world.

FS: *We made many visits to Tezuka Pro. They had a tiny reception area, and the rest of the place was totally chaotic. There was all this work going on and Tezuka himself was always being besieged by editors, so he was off in a room locked away somewhere. We would talk to Mr. Matsutani initially, and then Tezuka would come out, say hello, and we'd talk to him. He had at that time twelve, maybe thirteen assistants. He had one of the largest manga production studios in Japan. In addition to his assistants, he had his father, who was the president; Mr. Matsutani, who was his manager; and there were office people. Matsutani was his personal manager, which means he sacrificed the best years of his life for Dr. Tezuka. He's the president of Tezuka Productions now. Back then he very rarely slept in his own bed. He usually slept in the office on the sofa. We would go there, and he would be pattering around in his slippers, like everybody else, looking really sleepy. He would ward off the editors when they were trying to break down the door, and he would try to take care of Tezuka's schedule to make sure he could get his work done by his deadlines. It's just amazing—he very rarely got a chance to sleep. Anyone who worked with Tezuka very closely, their lives were not exactly made hell, but they didn't sleep a lot.*

Q: What was it like meeting and working with Dr. Tezuka?

JC: *It was amazing to work with Tezuka. I can recall dinners, plane trips, car rides, conferences...The man had an amazing energy. He was truly driven to create. I don't think he slept more than three hours a day. A typical trip to the U.S. would start with a trip to a local movie theater, directly from the airport, to see a new animated film. From there, a bite to eat, and then directly to a meeting for some new project. After that, perhaps he'd go to a meeting of fans, arranged to coincide with his visit. Tezuka would talk and listen for hours without showing any fatigue. From there, he would return to the hotel to continue drawing manga, usually with an editor waiting outside his hotel room door,*

preparing to hand carry the finished pages back to Japan the next morning. He was truly an amazing individual.

I can recall Fred and I interpreting for him at a comic book convention. We'd interpret in shifts because we could not individually maintain the pace and intensity of Dr. Tezuka's dialogue.

FS: *He was very polite and very kind. I've never understood completely why, but he once told me that when he first saw me he thought I was a little scary. I think it's because I'm tall, my hair may have been a bit long, and we didn't have very good Japanese business manners then. We must have been kind of a shock. Here, out of the blue, were these two foreigners speaking fluent Japanese, accompanied by two Japanese college students. There weren't quite as many foreigners speaking Japanese in those days, and I'm sure in the world of manga, other than a few indirect approaches from American publishers or something, they probably had very few foreigners ever coming to the office. Actually, according to Sakamoto, when he first contacted Tezuka Productions he was initially rebuffed. It was only after considerable persuasion—and reassuring Tezuka that as a group of both Japanese and Americans Dadakai would be able to faithfully translate his work—that he decided to take a gamble on us.*

Tezuka was an extraordinarily kind man when he was dealing with friends, fans, or the general public. To his staff and people who were really close to him, he could throw a fit and make life miserable for them, but to us especially, he was extraordinarily kind.

Tezuka had a huge influence on my life, in every way. If you've ever met one person in your life who changed you, you know what I mean. I never would have done so much with manga if I hadn't known Tezuka, and both Jared and I had a long relationship with him that lasted many years after translating Phoenix. Having worked with Tezuka made everything possible, because in Japan human relations are so important. I wouldn't have been able to do Manga! Manga! if I hadn't known Tezuka. Knowing him opened the door to interviewing so many artists, not only for Manga! Manga!, but for Dreamland Japan and everything else I've subsequently written. Because of my writings, in 2000 I won the Asahi Newspaper's Special Prize category of their prestigious Osamu Tezuka Cultural Award. I had to give a speech in Japanese on stage in front of hundreds and hundreds of industry and media people and I nearly choked. I was trying to explain what Tezuka meant to me but I couldn't do it justice. He changed my life forever.

A Journey through Time and Space: An Overview of the Complete *Phoenix* Saga

The complete *Phoenix* saga is a story about mankind that features a historical-narrative structure unlike anything that has come before it. The first volume depicts the dawn of civilization. The second volume jumps to the far future. The setting for the third story shifts back to early history, and so on, back and forth, from past to future; the amplitude decreases as past and future converge to meet in the present.

Dawn (1967)

240-270 A.D.

The era of Queen Himiko of the Yamatai Koku. The work quotes from the accounts of the *Gishiwajinden*. Also uses accounts from the legend of Jinmu Tousai.



The scene in the Amano Iwato myth where Himiko compares herself to Amaterasu-Oumikami and a solar eclipse occurs.

Yamato (1968-69)

320-350 A.D.

Based on the legend of Yamato-takeru-no-mikoto. The dates above were inferred from the account of Old Man Takeru, and from information in Dawn.



Disguised as a woman, Prince Yamato Oguna approaches the Chieftain of the Kumaso and stabs him. As told in the Kiki myth, the prince gets the name "Takeru" from his opponent right before he dies.



Karma (Hou-ou)

(1969-70) 720-752 A.D.

The complicated drama of the spirit of two Buddhist sculptors. Set in the Nara Period (710-794) during the national enterprise of the construction of the Great Buddha. Here, the Hou-ou (a Chinese myth) is the Phoenix.



Akanemaru, who has been ordered by the authorities to be in charge of the construction and design of the Great Buddha, is shocked when the statue sheds tears. The workers become frightened, and the bizarre phenomenon halts construction.



Robe of Feathers

(1971) 937-941 A.D.



A sci-fi version of the Hagiwara Legend of Miho no Matsubara in Enshu (modern day Shizuoka). Set during Taira no Masakado's rebellion which occurred during the Heian Period (898-1185).



Civil War (1978-80)

1172-1189 A.D.

The time of the Genpei Kassen (War between the Taira and the Genji) after the fall of the Heishi (Taira Clan). Using the *Heike Monogatari* and *Gikeiki* as a backdrop, this story depicts "combat" as the fate of living things.



The spirit of a woman swimming in the ocean is captured by the beauty of the white sand and green pine. The spirit of a fisherman is bewitched by the beauty of the woman and he hides her clothes...



Strange Beings

(1981) 1468-1498 A.D.

The Sengoku Period (1482-1558). Sakonosuke, the heir of General Yagi Iemasa, cuts down the nun, Yaobikuni, who seems to be 800 years old. But she doesn't realize the true relationship between herself and the nun.



The banner bearer is saying that "now" is the beginning of the Sengoku Wars and they are in the middle of the Onin Rebellion. In other words, they are in a time before Sakonosuke was born!

Sun (1986-88)

663-672 A.D.

The story begins after the defeat of the Japan-Kudara alliance at Hakusukinoe and Japan's withdrawal from the Korean peninsula, and ends with the struggle for the imperial throne during the Jinshin Rebellion.



Emperor Kobun, formerly called Otomo no Miko, is the cousin of Takachi no Miko, who is the son of Oama no Miko.



PAST

FUTURE

Future (1967-68) 3404 A.D.-infinity

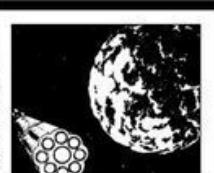
The end of the future. Mankind is in decline and has become very conservative. The earth is run down and faces devastation. Eventually a nuclear war breaks out causing the end of everything.



The Yamato Central Main Building Megalopolis. Yamato is one of the five remaining underground cities of mankind.

Universe (1969) 2577 A.D.

In Orion, a sub-light speed rocket heading towards Earth crashes into a meteorite. The ship becomes unable to fly and four people manage to escape, including Saruta and Nana.



Each of the passengers escapes in an individual escape pod. However, the pods only have enough food for half a year and enough air for a year and a half. Possibilities of survival are...

Resurrection (1970-71) 2482-3344 A.D.

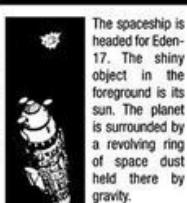
In the year 3344, Prof. Saruta lands on the moon. He meets and acquires Robita in his final form. Spanning 860 years, the end of this episode goes beyond *Universe* and close to the beginning of *Future*.



Robita and this rocket also make appearances in *Future*, where Robita stops Rock and then gets shot by him.

Nostalgia (1976-78) Indeterminate (approx. 25th century)

A Japanese woman named Romy establishes a civilization and history for the formerly uninhabited planet, Eden-17. Her husband dies an unnatural death, but the life she carries inside her...

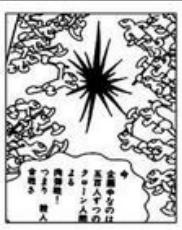


The spaceship is headed for Eden-17. The shiny object in the foreground is its sun. The planet is surrounded by a revolving ring of space dust held there by gravity.

Life (1980) 2155-2170 A.D.

Human clones are being created, all for high ratings and a public-killing TV game show called *Clone Man Hunt*.

Animal clones were created for food. Human clones are created for a TV show—the cloning company president speaks as a sponsor. A terrifying plan for a TV show!



Sun (1986-88) 2008 A.D.

The "Light Tribe" acquires the Phoenix in space. However, they turn it into an icon and come to control society through religion. Non-believers are called "shadows" and are chased out to live underground.



The head temple of the "Light Tribe." A young shadow boy named Suguru endeavors to climb the great tower and steal the Phoenix.

PHOENIX AND ME

By Osamu Tezuka



The serialization of *Jungle Taitei* in *Shonen Jump* ended in 1954, and I was at a loss as to what to create next.

Then I saw Stravinsky's famous ballet, *L'oiseau de Feu*. Of course the ballet itself was excellent, but I was especially intrigued by the prima ballerina dancing as the spirit of the phoenix.

The ballet is based on an old Russian legend about a prince that has been captured by a demon. The spirit of the phoenix saves the prince by acting as a guide for his escape. I thought that this passionate, elegant, and mysterious bird would make a wonderful main character comparable to the likes of Leo from *Jungle Taitei*.

Actually, every country has a legend about a mysterious bird such as the phoenix. In these legends, the symbol of supernatural life force takes form as a bird, such as the immortal bird called the Hou-ou from the legend of Hourai-san.

I wanted to utilize this phoenix to portray Japanese history in my own way. The theme would be about man's attachment to life and the complications that arise from greed. The phoenix would be the vehicle that would bring it all together.

As a new challenge, I wanted to start by creating the beginning and then the end of a long story. The story would then return to an ancient period right after the dawn of man. I would then continue to go back and forth, between past and future. In the end, I would set the story where past and future converge—the present. This story, set in the present, would tie all the previous stories together to form a long drama running from the dawn of man all the way to the distant future.

Each story would stand on its own and seem to have nothing to do with the other stories, but the final story would tie everything together—and for the first time, the reader would realize that the structure of the series is such that each story would be just one part of a much longer story. After all, man's history does not have clear divisions or breaks.

Each episode would portray life from various angles and set up different problems. Moreover, the style of each of the episodes would vary from one another, covering a range of genres: science-fiction, war story, mystery, comedy.

I don't know how many more years *Phoenix* will continue, but after it is completed, please go back and read through the whole series again. Otherwise, it will be difficult for me to respond to criticism.

Osamu Tezuka, December 1969

Translated from the Japanese by Andy Nakatani